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, WITH KELLY TO CHITRAL



# WITH KELLY TO CHITRAL

BY

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON AND NEW YORK  
EDWARD ARNOLD  
CALCUTTA: THACKER, SPINK, & CO.  
1896





GILGIT,  
21st October 1895.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Before you read this short history of a few brief weeks, I must warn you that it is no record of exciting adventure or heroic deeds, but simply an account of the daily life of British officers and Indian troops on a frontier expedition.

How we lived and marched, what we ate and drank, our small jokes and trials, our marches through snow or rain, hot valleys or pleasant fields, in short, all that contributed to fill the twenty-four hours of the day is what I have to tell

I write it for you, and that it may please you is all I ask.—Your son,

W. B.



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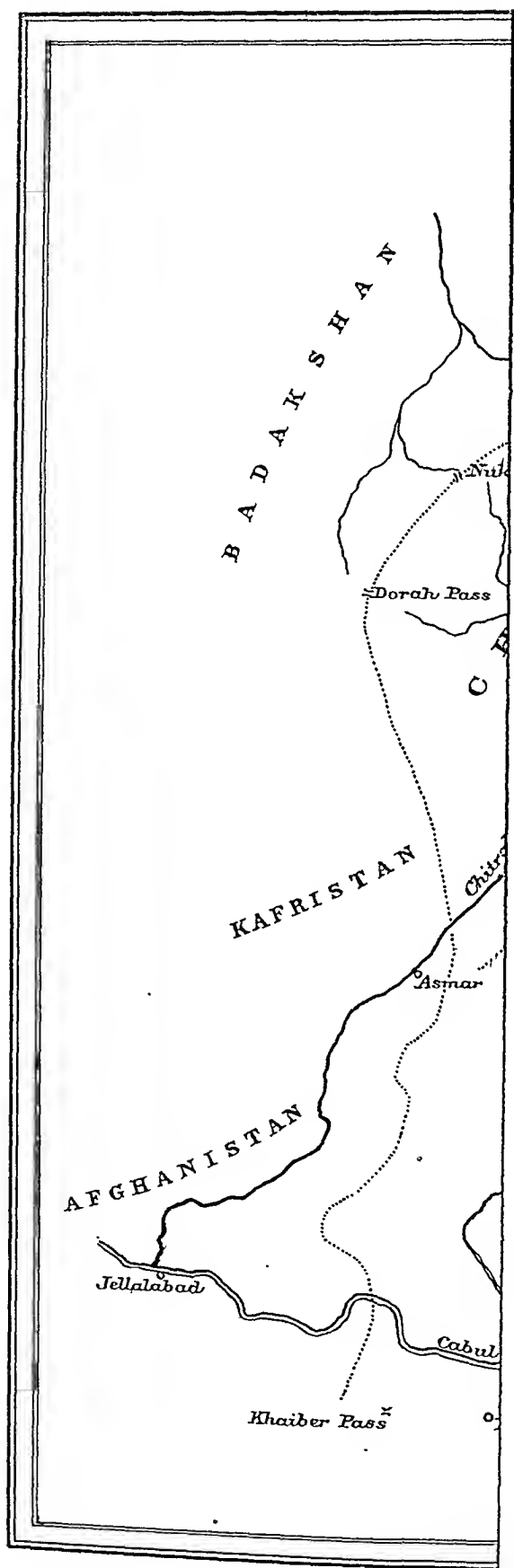
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\*.\* Thanks are due to the Publishers of Mr. Thomson's *The Chitral Campaign* for the loan of two blocks illustrating "Chokalwat" and "Nisa Gol" from Lieut. Beynon's sketches.





# WITH KELLY TO CHITRAL

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

WOULD you like to go up to Gilgit?"  
"Rather."

I was down in the military offices at Simla, hunting for a book and some maps, when I was asked the above question. No idea of Gilgit had before entered my head, but with the question came the answer, and I have since wondered why I never before thought of applying for the billet.

This was at the end of June 1894, and on the 24th August I was crossing the Burzil pass into the Gilgit district. As day broke on the 31st August, I dropped down several thousand feet



from Doyen to Ramghat in the Indus valley, and it suddenly struck me I must have come down too low, and got into Dante's Inferno. As I passed under the crossbeam of the suspension bridge, I looked to find the motto, "All hope relinquish, ye who enter here." It wasn't there, but instead there was a sentry on the bridge, who, on being questioned, assured me that though there was not much to choose in the matter of temperature between the two places, I was still on the surface of the earth. He seemed an authority on the subject, so I felt happier, and accepted the cup of tea offered me by the commander of the guard.

Two hours later I was in Bunji, where I found I was to stay, and two days after that, an officer on his way down to Kashmir passed through, and almost the first question he asked me was, why on earth I had come up to Gilgit. "Gilgit's played out," said he. Well, I had been asked that question several times on my march up, so I may as well explain that there are officially two chief causes which send men up to Gilgit—one is debts, and the other, the Intelligence Branch. These, I say, are the official reasons, but the real reason is the

chance of a "frontier row." In Simla they call them military expeditions. This accounts for the last part of that young officer's speech. There seemed no chance of a row to him, so he was going to other fields, and wondered at my coming up. At first, the result seemed to bear him out, as within two months he was on the war-path in Waziristan, while I was still licking my heels at Bunji; but luck changed later, and I laughed last.

Well, to continue, my official reason for coming to Gilgit being the Intelligence Branch, I was ordered up to Chitral early in November for some survey work, and thus obtained the knowledge of the route and country that was to stand me in such good stead later on. I finished my work in Chitral in ten days, starting back for Gilgit on the 1st December, arriving there on the 19th. I spent Christmas in Gilgit, and started on the 2nd January 1895 for Hunza, where I expected to remain for the rest of the winter.

News of the murder of Nizam-ul-mulk, Mehter of Chitral, reached Gilgit on the 7th January, and Dr. Robertson, Political Agent at Gilgit, at once made preparations for a visit to Chitral.

Captain Townshend, who was at Gupis with Gough of the 2nd Gurkhas, received orders to march with two hundred and fifty rifles of the 4th Kashmir Infantry. The 1st detachment started under Gough, the second following under Townshend. The British Agent, Captain Campbell, and Surgeon Captain Whitchurch, joined the 2nd party at Ghizr, and they all crossed the pass together. At Mastuj they picked up the remainder of the 14th Sikhs, under Harley, who had not gone down to Gurdon at Chitral, and then started for Chitral, arriving there on the 31st January. Lieutenant Moberly went from Gilgit with a detachment of the 4th Kashmir Infantry and took command of Mastuj. Gough returning to Ghizr, Baird took over command of Gupis, which was garrisoned by the 6th Kashmir Infantry, and I was brought down from Hunza to take over Baird's billet as staff officer. Shortly after, Fowler, R.E., was ordered to Chitral with his Bengal Sappers, and Edwardes, 2nd Bombay Infantry, to the same place, to take command of the Hunza Nagar Levies, which were now called out. Baird was next ordered up to Chitral and relieved by Stewart,



Nizam-ul-Mulk, Mehtar of Chitral.



R.A. On 21st February, Ross and Jones and the detachment of 14th Sikhs left Gilgit *en route* for Mastuj. The Hunza and Nagar Levies came in to Gilgit on the 7th March. I issued Snider carbines and twenty rounds ammunition to each man, and they left the next day. These Levies were splendid men, hardy, thick-set mountaineers, incapable of fatigue; and, as a distinguishing badge, each man was provided with a strip of red cloth which they wore in their caps, but which, we afterwards found by practical experience at Nisa Gol, was inadequate.

As news from Chitral had ceased for some days, Captain Stewart, Assistant British Agent in Gilgit, determined to call up the 32nd Pioneers, who were working on the Chilas road, so as to be ready for an advance in case any forward movement was necessary. In consequence of this order, Colonel Kelly marched into Gilgit on the 20th March with two hundred men, Borradaile following on the 22nd with a like party.

On the 21st we heard from Mastuj that Ross's party of 14th Sikhs had been cut up, Ross himself and some forty-six Sepoys being killed,

Jones and fourteen men alone managing to cut their way back ; he and nine of the survivors being wounded. There was no news of Edwardes and Fowler. This news upset the apple-cart, and telegrams began to fly around, with the result that Colonel Kelly was put in command of the troops in the Gilgit district, with full civil powers on his line of operations. This telegram arrived on the evening of the 22nd. The day before, Colonel Kelly had offered me the position of staff officer to the force, and I naturally jumped at the chance. Dew of the Guides, who was on the sick-list, was sufficiently well to take over my work, so there was no difficulty on that score ; and as I had long had my kit ready for any emergency, I merely bundled my remaining possessions into boxes, which I locked up and left to look after themselves till my return.

Here I may as well describe what the force consisted of. First, there were four hundred men of the 32nd Pioneers, commanded by Borradaile, Colonel Kelly having taken command of the column. Bar these two, we were all subalterns. Peterson was the senior, and commanded the 2nd

detachment, as we were marching to Ghizr in two parties. Then there was Bethune the adjutant, and Cobbe, and Browning-Smith the doctor—these were all 32nd Pioneers. Captain de Vismes, 10th Bombay Infantry, came along with us as far as Gupis, where he relieved Stewart, R.A., who, of course, was in command of the two guns of No. 1 Kashmir Mountain Battery. Stewart is an Irishman, and the most bloodthirsty individual I have come across. He used to complain bitterly because the Chitralis wouldn't give us a fight every day. Then there was Luard, the Agency Surgeon; we used to chaff him considerably during the march to Gupis, as he turned up in a Norfolk jacket and a celluloid collar. I think he had sent his kit on to Gupis; at any rate, after that place he dressed in Khaki uniform like the rest of us. These were all who started from Gilgit, so I'll introduce the others as we pick them up.



## CHAPTER II

### THE MARCH BEGINS

COLONEL KELLY assumed command on the 22nd March, and the next morning the first detachment of two hundred Pioneers, under Borradaile, marched off. The local Bible, commonly known as the Gazetteer, states that it never rains in Gilgit; this being so, it naturally started to rain on the morning of the 23rd, and kept it up for two days. We were marching without tents, so the first night the men had to run up their waterproof sheets into shelters.

Colonel Kelly, Luard, and myself started about 2 P.M. to catch up the troops, who had started about 9 A.M. Luard had a beast of a pulling pony, and as his double bridle hadn't got a curb chain, it was about as much use as a headache, so I suggested

he should let the pony rip, and promised to bury his remains if he came a cropper. He took my advice and ripped ; you couldn't see his pony's heels for dust as he disappeared across the plain. We found him all right in camp when we got there.

The men were already in camp, and pretty comfortable, in spite of the rain. Colonel Kelly had a small tent, and the rest of us turned into convenient cow-sheds. We were not troubled with much baggage, bedding, greatcoats, and a change of clothing ; the men had poshteens (sheepskin coats), and everybody pleased themselves in the matter of boots, most of us preferring chuplies—a native kind of sandal with a leather sock, a very good article in snow, as you can put on any number of socks without stopping the circulation of blood in your feet. Officers and men were all provided with goggles, and very necessary they were.

We had a very jolly mess. The force being so small, the 32nd Pioneers kindly asked the remaining officers to mess with them, every man of course providing his own plate, knife, fork, and spoon, the cooking pots being collected for the general good. We had breakfast before starting, the hour for

marching being 7 A.M. as a rule. The Pioneers had some most excellent bacon; good eggs and bacon will carry a man through a long day most successfully. I remember that when that bacon gave out, there was more mourning than over all the first-born of Egypt. Mutton we never ran out of; like the poor, it was always with us.

We got into camp as a rule some time in the afternoon, and then indulged in tea and chupatties; whisky was precious, and kept for dinner, which took place at dusk. Sometimes, when we got into camp late, dinner and tea were merged into one; however, it made no odds, we were always ready to eat when anything eatable came along. The mess provided some camp tables, and most of us managed to bring a camp stool, so we were in the height of luxury. After dinner a pipe or two, and then we turned in; we generally managed to get some grass to put under our blankets, but if we didn't, I don't think it made much difference; we were all young, and used to sleeping out on the hillside after game, frequently above the snow line, so it was no new experience. If it rained or was cold, we generally managed to get into a hut; these

are remarkably strongly built, good stone walls, and thick, flat, wooden roofs with a mud covering, a hole in the middle of the floor for the fire, and a hole in the roof for the smoke—at least that was what we supposed was the idea, but the smoke generally preferred to remain inside.

There were also other discomforts of a minor nature. For instance, the cows and goats used to take it as a personal matter if you objected to their sharing the room with you; they were big enough, however, to catch and turn out, but there were other occupants of a more agile nature, armies of them, whom it was hopeless to try and eject; we suffered so much from their pleasing attentions that we generally preferred to sleep outside, weather permitting.

Our second march was to a village called Suigal in the Punyal district, governed by Raja Akbar Khan, a jolly old chap who came out to meet us on the road; he lives in a castle on the left bank of the river, which is here crossed by one of the highest and longest rope bridges in the country. In spite of his size, he is a very good polo player, as are all his family, some of whom were shut up

in the Chitral Fort with Dr. Robertson. He now offered his services and those of his people to Government, which Colonel Kelly accepted, and the old man retired very pleased, to rejoin us later on. At Suigal we managed to get all the troops under shelter, as it was still raining, and it was now the second day that they had been wet through.

The next day the rain had luckily stopped, and towards noon the sun came out, and everybody's dampened spirits cheered up. We marched that day to Hoopar Pari, making a double march instead of halting at Gurkuch. Pari means a cliff—and the camping ground is a horrid little place shut in by high cliffs close to the bed of the river. There is no village near. It is a desolate place at the best of times, and when there is any wind blowing, it is like camping in a draught-pipe.

From Hoopar Pari we marched to Gupis. Gupis is a fort built by the Kashmir troops last year, on the most scientific principle, the only drawback being that it is commanded on all sides, and would be perfectly untenable if attacked by three men and a boy armed with accurate long-range rifles. Here we picked up Stewart, who was turning Catherine



A "Pari" on the road to Gupis

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wheels at the thought of taking his beloved guns into action. He expressed a desire to try a few shells on the neighbouring villages, to practise his men in ranging; but as there were objections to this plan, the idea was allowed to drop. At Gupis we made a raid on the stores in the officers' quarters and pretty well cleared them out. De Vismes, who took command, had to get a fresh supply up from Gilgit.

We had a merry dinner that night, provided, I think, by Stewart, who used to get up at intervals and dance a jig at the idea of seeing his guns the next morning—they were coming on with the second detachment under Peterson. From Gupis I sent my pony back to Gilgit, as it was useless taking it any farther, as we doubted being able to take animals over the pass, which eventually proved to be impossible. From Gupis onwards we had to be content with the usual hill track of these countries, good enough for a country pony, but still nothing to be proud of; here we discarded our Government mules, and took coolie transport instead. The march from Gupis to Dahimal is a long, trying one, up and down all the



way. Cobbe, who was on rearguard, didn't get in till long after dark.

The village of Dahimal lies on the opposite bank of the river, so we did not cross, but bivouacked on the right bank, where there was some scrub jungle that provided us with wood. The Pioneers had brought four ducks; they were carried in a basket along with the mess-stores. Browning-Smith, who ran the messing, got quite pally with these ducks, and as soon as they were let out of their basket, he used to call them, and off they would waddle after him in search of a convenient puddle. I forget when those ducks were eaten, but I don't remember them at Ghizr, and am sure they didn't cross the pass.

Our next march was a short one to Pingal, only about nine miles. Here we were met by Mihrbhan Shah, the Hakim or governor of the upper part of the valley. Mihrbhan Shah is a bit of an authority in the murder line, having been employed by the late lamented Nizam-ul-mulk as chief murderer. Mihrbhan Shah is particularly proud of one of his little jobs, which he flatters himself he accomplished in a very neat and artistic manner. I forget the

details, but it resulted in the death of five men. I asked him in to afternoon tea, Shah Mirza acting as interpreter. We had a long chat, from which I gained some very useful details about the state of the parties in Chitral, who was likely to help, and who wasn't, also a description of the road to Killa Drasan, which I did not know. This latter information seemed so important that I reported it that night to Colonel Kelly, and it was then and there decided to march *via* Killa Drasan instead of by the usual road through Buni.

I don't think I have mentioned Shah Mirza before, so I will introduce him now, as he was one of our most useful allies, and is now one of my greatest friends. He belongs to the Punyal family, and is Wazir or governor of Sai and Gor. He lives at Damot, a village in the Sai valley, opposite Bunji, and it was during my stay there that I first got to know him. He has an interesting history, and, among other adventures, has travelled through the Pamirs and Chitral in disguise. He was our chief interpreter, and he, or one of his followers, of whom he had five, always kept near us. His followers were enlisted Levies, and one of them

had formerly been my shikaree ; in fact, he only left me as he was called out as a levy.

It is the custom of the country for the headmen of districts to come and pay their respects to any Sahib who may travel through their country, and the proper etiquette is to supply your visitors with tea and sweetmeats—biscuits will do just as well, and they like plenty of sugar. They then pay you the most barefaced compliments, and make the startling assertion that you are their father and mother ; upon which you reply that all you have is at their disposal. If they have any petition,—and they generally have,—they insinuate it gently in the general conversation, so you have to be looking out for traps of this sort. When you have suffered sufficient evil for the day, you mildly suggest that they are probably fatigued, and would like to rest. They take the hint, and the remainder of the biscuits, and depart. We used to have lots of these visits, which went by the name of “ political teas.”

Mihrbhan Shah proved very useful to us, I fancy he knew he would get small mercy if he fell into the hands of the opposition, and therefore

did all he could to place our force between them and himself. Both at Pingal and our next halting place, Cheshi, he managed to billet all our small force in the villages, and no doubt our men were very thankful, as we were getting pretty high up, and the nights were decidedly cold. Although it was a friendly district, we had regular pickets and sentries, and a British officer on duty to see everything was correct.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SHANDUR PASS

SHORTLY after leaving Pingal, the character of the country changed considerably, and instead of a continual alternation of cliff and river bed, the valley became more open and level ; we were, in fact, nearing the upper end of the valley. Beyond Cheshi the road leads up a bluff and down the other side on to the bed of the Pandur Lake. This lake had, at the beginning of 1894, been a sheet of water some four and a half miles long, but, the dam at its end having given way in July, it had drained off rapidly ; and when I had crossed it in November of the same year, the mud of its bed was only just becoming firm and was cracked and fissured in every direction. It was now covered with a sheet of

snow, through which the river twined dark and muddy.

We had now reached the snow line, and our green goggles were taken into use. The march of our column churned the snow and mud into a greasy slime, and the going was very tiring. However, we came in sight of the Ghizr post by 2 P.M., and Gough, of the 2nd Gurkhas, who was in command, came out to meet us. From him we learned that none of his messengers that had been sent to Mastuj with letters had returned, and it was now some ten days since the last communication had reached him; so it became evident that the enemy were between Laspur and Mastuj. We knew that they had not crossed the pass, or we should have seen them before this, so we were pretty hopeful of a fight soon after crossing the pass, and we were not disappointed. At Ghizr we also found Oldham, a Sapper subaltern, who had preceded us by a few days. He had with him a party of Kashmir Sappers and Miners, who were now armed with Snider carbines. The post, which consisted of a block of isolated houses, had been fortified and surrounded with a thorn zareba, and was only

sufficiently large for the garrison of Kashmir troops then holding it, so our men were billeted in the neighbouring houses, one of which we turned into a mess and quarters for ourselves.

We halted on the 30th March, in order to allow the second detachment of the Pioneers and the guns to come up, as from here Colonel Kelly intended to march in one column. Here also we picked up the Hunza and Nagar Levies, numbering a hundred men, under their own leaders. They were posted in the village of Teru, some four miles up the valley, and from there could give timely warning if any hostile force crossed the pass. Wazir Humayun led the Hunza crowd, and Wazir Taifu the Nagar. I got to know Humayun very well indeed, and a right good sort he is. He had formerly lived for some five years in Chitral, when Raja Safdar Ali Khan of Hunza had made things too hot for him, but when Safdar Ali fled when we took the country in 1891-92, he was reinstated. Wazir Taifu I did not get to know so well, as the Nagar Levies were left behind at Mastuj, when we went on from there to Chitral. The second detachment under Peterson, and the guns with Stewart,

got into camp some time after midday on the 31st March.

In the meantime, every available coolie and pony had been collected, and we calculated on being able to start the next morning, with ten days' rations for the whole force. By 6 A.M. on the 1st April the troops had fallen in and were ready to start, and a nice handy little lot we had. Four hundred Pioneers, two mountain guns, forty Kashmir Sappers and a hundred Levies. Then the coolies were told to load up, and the trouble began. It now appeared that some hundred coolies and ponies from Yasin had bolted during the night. We had put too much faith in Mihrbhan Shah's influence, and all those villagers who were not directly under his government had gone. Those hundred coolies meant the transport of our supplies, and without them we should only have the food actually carried in the men's haversacks. We had cut down our baggage to the vanishing point, and the men were carrying all they could, and we did not dare leave our reserve ammunition behind.

The column had just moved off when this state of things became known and was reported to me.



Colonel Kelly was at the head of the column, so I snatched the nearest pony, tumbled its load on to the ground, and went scrambling through the snow after the troops. Of course there was nothing to be done except halt the column until the coolies could be collared and brought back, so Stewart, who had a battery pony with him, was sent off down the road after the absconding coolies. They must have started the evening before, as he only caught a few of them up fifteen miles back, and had great difficulty in bringing them along with him. We met him as we were returning to Ghizr at seven o'clock that evening. Stewart had scarcely gone ten minutes before some fifty coolies were found hiding in a village; they were soon driven out and made to lift their loads. This gave us some six days' rations, and with it we moved off, our great object being to get across the pass and open communications with Mastuj. After that we could see about getting on to Chitral. Our transport consisted of country ponies and coolies, and I remained behind to see the last off and rearguard moving before I started myself.

About two miles from Ghizr post there was a

steep ascent where the road twisted and curled among a mass of débris fallen from the cliffs above, and in one place the ponies had to be helped through a narrow passage between two fallen boulders. About midday I caught up the tail of the troops, who were already past the village of Teru, the highest inhabited spot in the valley ; there are only a few houses, and these are scattered about in clumps a few hundred yards apart. Passing on, I caught up the battery, and reached the leading infantry, when suddenly the word to halt was passed down the long line.

We were now on a narrow plain, and the snow on either hand of the track which the troops were following in single file was over my waist, as I soon found whenever I left the path in order to reach more quickly the head of the column. On arriving there, I found the track had suddenly ended, and before us was the level expanse of snow-covered valley. Attempts were being made to get the gun mules of the battery through this, but at every step they sank up to their girths, even then not finding firm foothold. Trials were then made of the ground at the sides of the valley, but the snow was found

equally deep and soft there ; and after spending an hour or so in futile attempts to get forward, it became evident to all that no animal could possibly pass over the snowfield in its present condition. We had only gone some eight miles out of the thirteen to Langar, and it was already three o'clock. There was nothing, therefore, for it but to return, and the word to retire was reluctantly passed along the line, and each man, turning where he stood, moved slowly back towards Ghizr.

But though laden or unladen animals could not cross the pass, we saw no reason to suppose that men could not, and therefore, at Teru, which we reached by four o'clock, a halt was made, and two hundred Pioneers, with Borradaile and Cobbe, and the Sappers under Oldham, were detailed to remain there with the Hunza Levies, and to try and force their way across the pass the next day. Borradaile was to receive all the coolie transport, which he was to send back as soon as he got across the pass, in order that we might follow with the remainder of the troops. His orders were to entrench himself at Laspur, which was the first village across the pass, and if possible open communications with Mastuj.

The guns were immediately sent back to Ghizr, and we set to work to sort out the kits of Borradaile's party from the remainder. The unavoidable confusion at first was something dreadful. First of all, the kits had to be unloaded, then those of Borradaile's party separated and put on one side; the remaining kits were then loaded on the ponies and sent off, as fast as the ponies could be loaded up, back to Ghizr. The ammunition had to be divided, and as much as possible given over in the way of supplies. All this time we had to have a ring of sentries round to stop the coolies from bolting, but as soon as we had got the ponies off, the coolies were collected, and sat down in the snow under a guard. Borradaile's party were then told off into the different houses, and the coolies likewise, still under guard, the ammunition and supplies stacked, and the job was done.

By this time it was about seven o'clock, getting dark, and also beginning to snow. All of us, officers and men, were covered with slush and mud from head to foot, and dripping wet. Smith, who was going with Borradaile's party, had, however, managed to get a fire going in one of the houses, and had got

some tea ready, bless him! We had a cup all round, and wished Borradaile and his party good luck. The remainder of us plunged out into the darkness and snow and splashed back to Ghizr. The men, who had started some time before us, were comfortably in their former quarters when we reached Ghizr.

On the way we met Stewart, who had just returned from his coolie hunt, and was seated on a rock, like Rachel mourning for her children, only in his case he was murmuring, not because the guns were not, but because they were back in Ghizr. "His guns were going over that pass even if he had to carry them himself, you may bet your boots on that! and begad, I'll set the gunners to cut a road; and d'ye think now the snow would bear the mules at night when it was frozen at all?"

We got back to the huts we had left in the morning by 8.30 P.M., and there was a general demand for something hot. Our servants, luckily, had been sent back straight, so it was not long before we had something to eat; that was our first meal since 5.30 A.M., and it was now about 9 P.M. We had marched some sixteen miles through snow,

and been on foot for some fifteen hours, and here we were back in the same place we had started from. Since midday we had been pretty well wet through, and the wind and cold had pecked the skin off our faces till it hung in flakes; still we were lucky in having a roof over our heads, as it had now started to snow in earnest. After dinner we weren't long before turning in.

We were up early the next morning, but Stewart and Gough were up still earlier, and were making sledges and trying experiments with loads. They came in flushed with success, swearing that they had dragged the whole ammunition of the guns by themselves across half a mile of snow, and that they would hve the guns over the pass in no time. Unluckily, the snow was still falling, and as Borradaile had all the available coolie transport, we were forced to wait till he could send it back. By noon he sent in a letter by one of the levies, saying he had been unable to start, as heavy snow was still falling, but would try the next day.

Shah Mirza now came up to me and said that there was a mullah in the village who had an infallible charm for stopping the snow, and a present

of a few rupees would no doubt set it in motion. I promptly inquired how it was the mullah was not carrying a load, but was told he was too old to help in that way, but would be only too delighted to overcome the elements ; so I gave the Mirza to understand that if the mullah would stop the snow-storm, the Sirkar would make him, the mullah, a great man ; in the meantime, I would give him a couple of rupees on account. Shah Mirza went off joyfully, evidently having implicit faith in the mullah.

Shortly after this, Gough came up, saying that the Kashmir troops in the post had volunteered to make a road through the snow, and if he could take fifty of them with four days' rations to Teru, a sufficient track might be made to Langar, our next camping ground, just this side of the pass, to enable the guns to be carried there without much difficulty. Colonel Kelly's permission having been obtained, we set about collecting all the shovels and spades we could find in the village. Among others I got hold of the mullah's, who became very indignant ; but I pointed out to him that as his prayers seemed to have no effect on the snow, perhaps his shovel

would make up for their deficiencies. We managed, by instituting a house-to-house visitation, to collect some twenty loads of oats, and with those supplied by the troops, we got altogether some forty, which were handed over to Gough. He and Stewart and fifty Kashmir Sepoys started off that day to Teru, taking with them half a dozen sledges that had been made out of ghi boxes.

Later in the day we had to send out foraging parties for wood and *bhoor* (chopped straw) as the commissariat reported their supply as running out; in fact, these parties had to go out every day during our stay in Glizz.

Early the next morning I got a note from Stewart, asking that the battery might be sent up to Teru, as there was enough fodder there for the mules, and experiments could be made for getting the guns along. I got the battery off sharp, but it was nearly noon before they got to Teru. The snow had ceased falling, and, the clouds clearing off, the sun made a blinding glare off the freshly fallen snow.

After breakfast I started off for Teru myself, to see how Borradaile was getting along, and, finding he had started, I left my borrowed pony at the



village, and, pushing on, caught up the rearguard a short way beyond where we had been forced to turn back on the 1st April. Here I found Stewart, Gough, and Oldham with the fifty Kashmir troops, two Sappers and Miners, and rearguard of the Pioneers, staggering along under the guns and ammunition in a track that had been beaten out by the troops marching in front. For some reason or other the sledges did not seem to act, partly, I think, because the track, being made by men marching in single file, was too narrow and uneven; at anyrate, when I arrived, the guns, wheels, carriages, and ammunition had been told off to different squads, about four men carrying the load at a time, and being relieved by a fresh lot every fifty yards or so. Even thus the rate of progression was fearfully slow, about one mile an hour, and the men were continually sinking up to their waists in snow. Added to this, there was a bitter wind, and a blinding glare, while the men were streaming with perspiration.

I know my own face felt as if it had been dipped in boiling water, and during the next few days the whole skin came off in flakes.

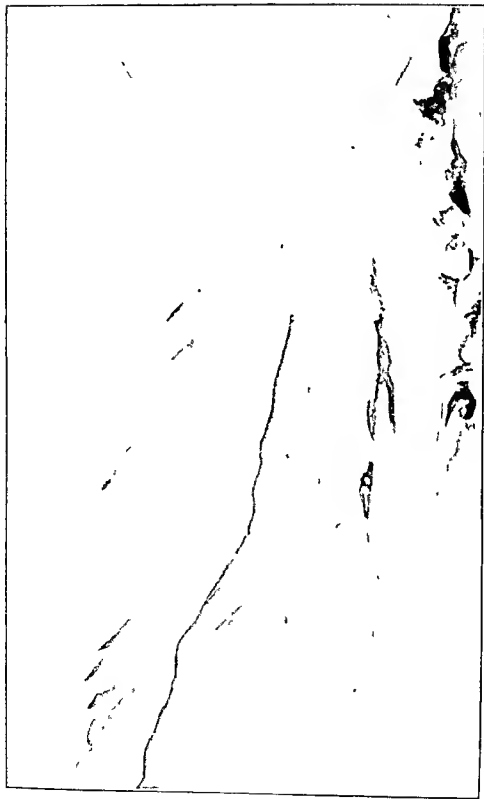
I may as well here describe the tribulations of the advanced party, prefacing my remarks by saying that they are founded on reports and hearsay, and therefore I beg any slight inaccuracy may be forgiven me. When I turned back to return to Ghizr, the party carrying the guns were just arriving at a stream called the Shumalkhand, which flows from a high pass of the same name, which is often used as a summer route to Mastuj, but at that time of year is impassible. From this stream to Langar, the camping ground on the eastern side of the Shandur Pass, is some four miles, the valley being open and fairly level, but covered with thick dwarf willow on the banks of the stream flowing down the centre which confines the road to the western side of the valley. The main body of the party I could see about one and a half miles ahead; they had already crossed the stream. That was about 4 p.m., and the rearguard did not get into camp till 11 p.m., and even then the guns had to be left about a mile from camp.

At Langar there is only one little wretched hut about six feet square, which was used as a shelter by the officers and one or two sick men, the re-

mainder huddling round fires in the snow. Luckily, as I have already said, there was a plentiful supply of wood to be had for the cutting. Many of the men, I hear, were too tired to cook their food, but simply lay down exhausted near the fires, the officers getting something to eat about midnight. Very little sleep was there for either officers or men that night, most of them passed it huddled up round the fires, or stamping up and down to keep warm.

Early the next morning the Pioneers and Levies started to cross the pass, while the remainder brought the guns into camp, which work, I believe, took the best part of the day.

On leaving the camping ground, the track leads sharply to the right, following the course of the Shandur stream, which is now merely a rushing brook. The ascent is fairly precipitous for about a mile, and is followed by a very gradual ascent,—so gradual, in fact, that it is difficult to say when the top of the pass is actually reached. This slope constitutes the pass, and is some five miles long, and twelve thousand three hundred and twenty feet above the sea; absolutely bare of trees, and with two fair-sized lakes upon its surface, it is easy to



The Shandur Pass.



imagine the deadly cold winds that sweep across it. The lakes were now frozen over, and the valley was one even sheet of spotless snow lying dazzling under the sun. It is this combination of sun and snow which causes so much discomfort and snow blindness; I had before crossed this same pass in December on a cloudy day, and although the whole of it was covered with freshly fallen snow, I did not even find it necessary to wear the goggles I had in my pocket ready for use.

The distance from Langar on the east to the village of Laspur on the west of the pass is not more than ten miles, yet Borradaile's party, leaving Langar at daybreak, did not reach Laspur till seven o'clock at night.

Strange as it may seem, the men suffered greatly from thirst, and from some mistaken idea of becoming violently ill if they did so, they refused to eat the snow through which they were floundering. Towards evening, as they reached the western end of the pass, three men, evidently an outpost of the enemy, were seen to bolt from behind some rocks and make good their escape, in spite of an attempt by the Levies to catch them.

The descent from the pass to the village of Laspur is some two miles long, and down a steep and rather narrow ravine. The Hunza Levies covered the spurs on each side, while the Pioneers descended down the centre. So sudden and unexpected was their arrival that the inhabitants were caught in the village, and naturally expressed their extreme delight at this unexpected visit—so polite of them, wasn't it? They also said that they would be glad to help us in any way we desired. They were taken at their word, and sent back next day to bring on the guns, while that night they were politely requested to clear out of some of their houses, which were quickly put into a state of defence and occupied by our troops. Supplies were also required of the village.

The next day was spent by the detachment in completing the defences, and collecting supplies and coolies. Towards evening a report was brought in that the enemy had collected to the number of about a hundred some three miles away. So Borradaile took out some of the men to reconnoitre. Some men were seen in the distance, but these the Levies declared to be only villagers, and as it was

getting dusk, the party returned to camp, only then learning that a levy had been taken prisoner. The man had gone some distance ahead of his fellows, and had been captured by two men who jumped out on him from behind a rock. That evening the guns were brought in by the Kashmir troops and the coolies, amid cheers from the Pioneers.

Nothing, I think, can be said too highly in praise of this splendid achievement. Here were some two hundred and fifty men, Hindus and Mussulmans, who, working shoulder to shoulder, had brought two mountain guns, with their carriages and supply of ammunition, across some twenty miles of deep, soft snow, across a pass some twelve thousand three hundred and twenty feet high, at the beginning of April, the worst time of the year. It must also be remembered that these men were carrying also their own rifles, greatcoats, and eighty rounds of ammunition, and wearing heavy sheepskin coats; they had slept for two nights in the snow, and struggled from dawn till dark, sinking at every step up to their waists, and suffering acutely from a blinding glare and a bitter wind. So much for the rank and file; but in their officers



they had had splendid examples to follow, especially Stewart and Gough, if one may select when all did so nobly. Both these officers took their turns with the men, Stewart with his gunners, and Gough with his Gurkhas, in carrying the guns, and both, with utter unselfishness and with complete disregard for their own personal comfort, gave their snow glasses to sepoy who, not having any, were suffering from the glare experienced on the first day. It is by these small acts that officers can endear themselves to their men, who, knowing that their officers have their welfare at heart, will follow wherever they may lead.

Thus was the Shandur Pass first crossed, and a position established from whence the force could work down to Mastuj and thence to Chitral.

I may here mention that so little did the Chitralis imagine that we could cross the pass, that letters were found in Laspur stating that the British force was lying in Ghizr, the men unable to move from frostbite, and the officers from snow blindness ; also that since then fresh snow had fallen, and no forces would now be able to cross for several weeks. In fact, the Chitralis looked upon the game as entirely

in their own hands; the surprise of our arrival was therefore all the more complete.

Having brought the guns and Borradaile's party safely across the pass, I return and relate Colonel Kelly's and my own experiences.

After leaving the guns being dragged through the snow to Langar on the 3rd April, I walked back to Teru. On the way I saw the mullah's shovel sticking up in the snow, with one half of the blade snapped off. Alas, poor mullah! At Teru I found the battery mules and drivers; these were ordered back to Ghizr, as they could be more easily fed there, and would be protected by the garrison of the post. I eventually got back to Ghizr before dark and reported events, and, just my luck, got a bad go of fever the next day. Great Scott! I did feel a worm! I was shivering with ague and my face was like a furnace. I hadn't a bit of skin on it either, and it was painful to eat or laugh from the cracked state of my lips. I managed to struggle through some necessary official letters, but as a staff officer that day I was not much use.

Colonel Kelly determined to start himself the next morning, with the Nagar Levies and Shah

Mirza, as we had managed to collect half a dozen coolies to carry our kits. I went with Colonel Kelly, the remainder of the Pioneers coming on as soon as the coolies from Borradaile's party arrived; we were expecting them the next day, the 5th April.

I turned in early that night, after having covered my raw face with some Vinolia powder that Colonel Kelly happened to have. I had not before known that these powders were supposed to be of any use. I had a vague sort of idea that they were used for sprinkling babies, but was unaware of the reason of this strange rite; however, I will now give the Vinolia Company what I believe is called an unsolicited testimonial. I stuck to that powder till I got to Mastuj, by which time my face had become human again. Colonel Kelly had a beard, so he didn't suffer so much. The next morning I felt much better, had no fever, and, thanks to the Vinolia, my face was much less painful.

We got the Levies and our kits off early, and about noon Colonel Kelly and I started on some borrowed ponies, which we rode as far as we could and then sent back. Having caught up the Levies,

we tramped forward along the track made by the first column, occasionally finding deserted sledges and bits of broken spades. The snow was now somewhat firmer than when the first party had crossed, owing to the top of the snow thawing slightly in the sun every day and being frozen hard again every night; all the same, the slightest divergence from the track plunged us up to our waists in snow.

The only one of our party who could walk on the snow without difficulty was my bull-terrier "Bill," a spotted dog of doubtful ancestry. He had been given to me as a bull-terrier when he was only a little white rat of a thing, and I had raised him at Bunji on tinned milk. He was a most uncanny dog (the joke is unintentional), and it was commonly believed in the force that his father was a tom cat. Poor Bill! Before he got to Laspur he was so snow blind that until we got to Mastuj I had to open his eyes for him every morning and bathe them with hot water before he could see, and he was hardly well again a month later.

We got into camp that night before dusk, pretty well fagged and wet, and as soon as the coolies

came in with our kits, we scraped a hole in the snow and pitched the colonel's small tent. In camp we found a few men who had been placed in charge of some ammunition that had been left behind for want of transport. This guard were mostly suffering a bit from snow blindness, but were otherwise all right, as they had run up shelters and had plenty of wood and their bedding. When I got at my kit, I took out a bottle of quinine and dosed our servants and orderlies all round, so that they should not have any excuse for getting fever, and then took some myself for the same reason. We then laid out our bedding in the tent, while the servants went into the hut, and turned in immediately after dinner, and had a very comfortable night.

We were up before dawn the next morning, and, as we had slept in our clothes, it was not long before we had had breakfast and struck camp. By 6 A.M. we were climbing the ascent to the pass. There was a wind whistling straight in our faces, and I had no idea anything could be so cold; it simply went clean through you, and I quite expected to hear my ribs sing like an Æolian harp. When we got on to the pass, the sun rose and the wind dropped quite

suddenly, and presently we had taken off our great-coats on account of the heat. After going about an hour, I began to suffer from mountain sickness, a curious and distinctly unpleasant sensation, very much like having a rope tied tightly round one's chest and back, and the shortness of breath necessitating a halt every hundred yards or so. Colonel Kelly did not suffer from it at all, but trudged along without a halt the whole way. That is the only time I have ever suffered from mountain sickness, and I have crossed the Shandur both before and since, as also other passes, without feeling any inconvenience.

By noon we had almost reached the highest point of the pass, and were skirting the larger lake, when we met the coolies of Borradaile's party returning with an escort of some of the Kashmir troops. They all seemed pretty lively in spite of the poor time they had been having; but as they are used to crossing the Shandur at all times of the year, I daresay our sympathy was a good deal wasted.

We were soon descending into the Laspur valley, and we had hardly dropped three hundred feet

before all sense of sickness left me, and I felt as fit as possible. A short way out of the village we were met by a patrol which Borradaile had sent out to meet us, and by two o'clock we were in camp, where we found Oldham in command, Borradaile having gone on a reconnaissance down the valley. The previous day news had been brought in that the enemy were assembled in the valley, and a small party had gone out, as I have already related. On the morning of the 6th April, Borradaile accordingly determined on another reconnaissance, this time taking the guns with him, they being carried by Laspuri villagers, who no doubt thought the game very poor fun. Gough went with the party, Oldham remaining in command of the post, which was garrisoned with the maimed, the halt, and the blind—in other words, with men suffering from frostbite and snow blindness, of whom there were some twenty-six of the former and thirty of the latter; those men of the Kashmir troops who were fit to march being sent back across the pass as escort to the coolies.

When the reconnoitring party had gone some three miles down the valley, they came across the

old camp fires of the enemy. At Rahman, two miles farther on, they left the snow behind, much to everybody's delight, and by one o'clock entered the village of Gasht, some eleven miles from Laspur, and about half-way to Mastuj, the Levies crowning a small knoll in the middle of the valley at the lower end of the village. From here they reported they could see the enemy some three miles farther down the valley, who were evidently engaged in building sangars and entrenching themselves. A short council of war was held as to the advisability of attacking them, but, considering that the force consisted of only a little over a hundred men and some fifty Levies, besides the two guns, and also the time of day, it was decided to return to camp, which was reached by dark. The day's work was highly creditable to all concerned; the march to Gasht and back had been some twenty-two miles, and information had been obtained of the position in which we might expect opposition from the enemy. On getting into camp, Borradaile's party found Colonel Kelly and myself waiting their arrival, eager to hear their news.



## CHAPTER IV

### FROM LASPUR TO GASHIIT

THAT night we had beef for dinner. This may appear a trivial fact, but it meant a great and blessed change from the eternal mutton we had been living on, none of us having tasted beef for quite six months, except in its condensed or tinned state, which does not count. Gilgit is a dependency of Kashmir, whose ruling family, being Hindus, strongly object to cow-killing, and therefore the law runs that no cows are to be slaughtered; hence none of us since crossing the bridge at Kohalla had tasted fresh beef. But now we were in Chitral territory, and a Mussulman country, so we were free to kill cows, but did so unostentatiously, as nearly all our force were Hindus. The dark deed was accomplished thus:

on the houses being searched on the arrival of the first party at Laspur, an innocent little calf was found in one of the houses, and quick as thought then and there despatched. I will not reveal the murderer's name, because I do not know it. All traces were removed, and for the next few days we enjoyed hot roast beef.

We were a merry party, but what a set of ruffians we looked! Stewart and Gough were both suffering from snow blindness, owing to their generous action in giving their goggles to sepoy, and passed most of their spare time with their heads over a basin of hot water, dabbing their aching eyes; none of us had much skin on our faces, and what little remained was of a patchwork description; none of us had shaved for days—we couldn't have stood the torture; and our clothes, too, were *showing signs of wear and tear*. We all now slept in our clothes, partly for the sake of warmth, and also to be in readiness in case of emergency. There we were, sitting or lying on our bedding, which was spread on the floor round the room, the latter divided, like all Chitrali houses, into loose stalls by low partitions, a small fire

burning in the centre of the room, from which a thick pillar of smoke rose and hung like a cloud from the roof, through a hole in which part of it escaped. Our swords and revolvers were hanging on the walls or from pegs in the beams, the whole scene dimly lit by one or two candles. It might look very picturesque, but I always consider the best hotel is good enough for me.

As there was not space enough in the stalls for all of us, Colonel Kelly and I, as the last comers, slept in a little room off the main one; here was evidently the winter store of fodder for the cattle as it was half full of bhoosa (chopped straw). This we spread evenly over the floor to the depth of some two feet, and then laid our blankets on top. There was just room enough for us to lie out straight, the Colonel taking one side and I the other, and a softer or more luxurious bed could hardly be imagined. We had to be careful, though, not to drop matches about, and to put out our pipes before going to sleep. A halt had been ordered for the following day, to give the men suffering from snow blindness and frostbite a chance to recover, so we turned in with the blissful conscious-

ness of not having to turn out at dawn, and slept like the dead.

The next day, April 7, was spent in hurrying forward all arrangements for an advance on the morrow. We also sent round messengers to all the villagers to come in and make their submission, on pain of having their villages burned; and seeing that we now had the upper hand, at any rate in their valley, the inhabitants came in without much hesitation, and also brought in a certain amount of supplies; consequently by night we had sufficient local coolies to carry all our baggage, supplies, ammunition, and, most important of all, the two guns. About noon on this day, Raja Akbar Khan of Punyal, whom I have before mentioned as meeting us on the march from Shoroh to Suigal, came into camp with fifty Levies, bringing in a convoy of ninety Balti coolies with supplies. We were getting along famously now, so Colonel Kelly decided to advance the next day without waiting for Peterson's detachment, as our first object was to open communication with Mastuj.

We had a political tea that afternoon: all the leaders of the Levies, old Raja Akbar Khan,

Humayun, Taifu, the Nagar Wazir, Shah Mirza, and one or two princelings who had come up to see some fighting, all squatted round our little room on the straw, swigging sweet tea and munching biscuits, quite a friendly gathering; in fact, so much tea was consumed that the mess president swore he would send in a bill.

We always got our earliest and most reliable information from the Levies, as most of them had blood relations among the Chitralis. They also knew just where to look for hidden grain and supplies of all sorts. As a rule there was generally a *câche* under or near the fireplace in the main room, but I have also seen the Levies find them in the most unlikely places, and very queer odds and ends they sometimes pulled out of these underground storerooms.

On the morning of April 8th the column was formed up and ready to start by 9 A.M. Poor Gough was being left behind at Laspur in command of the garrison, which consisted of some twenty-five Kashmir troops, and the Nagar and Punyal Levies, in all about a hundred. The Levies were to come on as soon as the second party arrived. Our force,

therefore, consisted of two hundred Pioneers, two guns, forty Kashmir Sappers, and fifty Hunza Levies. Our order of march was as follows: first of all went the Levies; then, with an interval of some five hundred yards, came the advance guard of a half company of Pioneers; the main body consisted of Kashmir Sappers, guns, one company of Pioneers, ammunition, hospital baggage, and rearguard of half company Pioneers. Both advance and rear-guards were commanded by British officers. It was a lovely, fine morning, and we were all in the best of spirits, and looking forward to leaving behind the detestable snow, and therewith our chief source of discomfort.

Poor old Gough looked awfully dismal at being left behind, but it was the fortune of war. At Gurkuch, at Gupis, at Ghizr, there was only one cry from officers and men—British and Native—“For Heaven's sake take us on with you!” The natives always added that they would never be able to face their womenfolk again if there had been fighting and they not in it. The Britisher expressed his disgust at what he called “his bally luck”, in more forcible terms, but it meant the same

thing, and we are all the same colour under the skin.

Off we went, through the village and across the stream by a rickety bridge, then down the left bank for about a mile, when we came to a small hamlet,—I forget its name,—and here I fell out and paid a visit to the house of Mahomed Rafi, the Hakim of the Laspur district. This hoary-headed old rascal had been playing fast and loose for a long time, but had at last cast in his lot openly with the enemy; he had a long list of offences to answer for, and is believed to be one of the actual murderers of Hayward about 1872.

Hayward was globe-trotting up Yasin way when these ruffians rushed his camp, seized him, and carried him into a wood with the intention of killing him. He asked them to defer the performance until daylight, as he should like to look on the world once more. This they agreed to, and soon after dawn made him kneel down and hacked off his head. Such is the story. Poor Hayward's body was brought into Gilgit, and he lies in an orchard close to the British Agency. I can quite imagine Hayward, or any man who has any appreciation of the

grandeur of Nature in her wilder moods, wishing to see the sun rise once again over these tumbled masses of snow peaks and bare cliffs. The startling sensation of the immensity of these hills in comparison with man's minuteness strikes home with almost the stunning effect of a sudden blow.

It is said that the calm pluck of Hayward touched even his murderers, callous as they are to bloodshed. It makes a sensational picture: a solitary figure in the foreground standing alone on the edge of a pine wood high up in the lonely grandeur of the everlasting hills, the first flush of dawn reddening the snow on peak after peak, changing the pure white to pink, the cold blue to purple, the tumbled sea of mountain summits gradually growing in distinctness, the soft mist rising from the valleys, and the group of wild figures standing within the shade of the pines. Hayward takes one long look on all this loveliness, and turns towards his executioners—men say that even they hesitated.

Mahomed Rafi, who was supposed to have actually killed Hayward, was now Hakim of Laspur, and, as I have said, had joined the enemy.

When I had travelled through Laspur in



November last, the old ruffian had come to pay his respects, and accompanied me part of the way to Mastuj, and while doing so, had stopped at a house to give some orders, and had informed me that this was one of his houses. On passing it now, I thought a visit might be useful, so, getting Shah Mirza and his Levies, I got permission to search the house. It had evidently only recently been occupied, for on bursting in the door we found the cooking pots in the fireplace and fresh meat hanging in one of the rooms. After a short search we found the grain store, with several mounds of grain, which was afterwards taken into Laspur. There was nothing much more that we could find in our hasty search, but I picked up an empty spectacle-case, astonished at finding it in such a place, as Mahomed Rafi never wore spectacles in his life. I showed it to Colonel Kelly, who promptly annexed it, as he was in want of one, having mislaid his own. Shah Mirza also collared a fowl, which no doubt formed his next meal.

I caught up the column before they had gone much more than a mile, just as they were crossing

a stream. After that we had some level marching into the village of Rahman, and by this time the snow was only lying in patches. Here we made a short halt. From Rahman there is a path across the hills to Chitral, by means of a nullah called the Goland Gnl, of which mention will be made hereafter, but at this time of year it was impossible to use this path, owing to the snow.

During the halt, the headman of the village came up to make his salaams, and also told me that a man of Ghizr had passed through that morning, escaping from the enemy. He was reported to be one of Gough's messengers, captured when taking letters to Moberly at Mastuj. I told the headman that he had better show his goodwill by bringing in the man, which he promised to do, and sent him in that night to our camp at Gasht. We learned little from him, except that the enemy were going to fight us between Gasht and Mastuj, and that the latter place was all right. This man had no idea of numbers, and when asked the strength of the enemy, replied invariably that there were very many men, but seemed equally uncertain if there were five hundred or five thousand collected in the sangar before us,

and yet he had been a prisoner in their camp for some fifteen days.

I found the best way of getting information out of the prisoners was to set Shah Mirza or Humayun on the job. They used to squat down over the fire with the prisoners and engage them in conversation, gradually getting what they knew out of them by simple-looking questions. Of course I couldn't do this as I didn't know their language, and the presence of a British officer put them on their guard at once.

Between Rahman and Mastuj the country is pretty much the same, a narrow valley running between high, stony hills, their tops covered with snow and their feet with boulders; then the bed of the valley more or less rocky, and the river winding from side to side, and below the main level of the valley, at depths varying from fifty to two hundred feet, the sides nearly always sheer cliff; at intervals were nullahs, down which ran streams of snow water from the hills to the river, or fans of alluvial deposit brought down by floods in previous years. On the flank of one such fan we found the village of Gasht, which we reached by 3.30 P.M. The

Levies had already occupied the knoll at the lower end of the village from whence the enemy had before been seen ; so, after fixing on a camping ground and giving the necessary orders, the officers all went forward to have a look.

From the top of the knoll there was an extended view of the valley, and I was able to point out the position of Mastuj, which was hidden by some rising ground, and also the general direction of the road. About three miles ahead we could distinctly see a sangar filled with men on the left bank of the river. That sangar was, as far as we could judge, on the right flank of the enemy's line. A few men could also be seen climbing a steep stone shoot on the right bank of the river, so evidently the enemy were going to try the effect of a stone avalanche as we went underneath. A good deal of discussion went on as to whether the enemy's main defence was on the left bank, in which case we should have to attack across the river, or on the right bank, in which case the present visible sangar was a flanking bastion.

At last someone suggested tea, so the meeting broke up. Colonel Kelly and I stayed behind. I

asked Colonel Kelly for permission to take some of the Levies and have a cast forward. I took the Hunza men and my shikaree, Faquir, as he could translate my orders to the Levies. Off we trotted, and by the time the other officers were having tea, I was well up the hillside. It was impossible to be rushed, as the ground was pretty bad, so I extended my men,—when it comes to sniping, one man is a smaller target than two,—and we skirmished up and forward, so as to bring us well above the enemy's line. In half an hour we were high enough to see all the valley below, and the enemy's position was spread out like a map. I sent the Levies on about a hundred yards, and then made them line a ridge, while I sat myself comfortably down and sketched the whole show.

With my glasses I could count the men in each sangar. They were evidently cooking their evening meal, as thin columns of smoke rose from each sangar in the still evening air. I could also make out the paths leading up the cliffs from the river, and saw men going down to fetch water. I sat and watched long after I had got all the information

I wanted, as I might perhaps get some useful tips that I had overlooked. It was very peaceful sitting there, but presently the sun dropped behind the hills, and it got too chilly for comfort. A whistle to the Levies and a wave of the hand brought them back, and we scrambled down the hill again, and were back in camp before dark. Here I heard that the Punyal Levies had been sent for from Laspur to come along at once.

As soon as I had explained the enemy's position to Colonel Kelly, orders were issued for the attack next day. They were short and simple. On the arrival of the Punyal Levies, they were to start, with a guide we had procured, to turn out the men above the stone shoot on the right bank of the river. I, with the Hunza Levies, was to start at 6 A.M. and work through the hills to the right rear of the enemy's position. The main body would start at 9 A.M. and attack in front. The baggage to remain in camp under a guard commanded by Sergt. Reeves, Commissariat. Then we had dinner and went to bed.

## CHAPTER V

### CHOKALWAT

AT 5 A.M. the next morning, my orderly, Gammer Sing Gurung, woke me. It was still dark, and I dressed as quickly as possible, so as not to disturb the others, who were snoring peacefully around me. Dressing consisted of putting on my coat, putties, and some canvas shoes with rope soles. I knew the ground I should be going over would be pretty bad, and with rope soles you can skip about rocks like a young lamb, whereas shooting boots would send you flying over the cliffs. By the time I had had some poached eggs and a cup of tea, the Hunza Levies were waiting outside, so I got into my sword and trappings and went. As I passed out, Colonel Kelly wished me good luck, and I said, "*Au*

*revoir* till twelve o'clock." The others snored peacefully.

Gammer Sing and the fifty Hunza Levies were ready, and I had put some chupatties into my haversack overnight, so off we went. By the time we were clear of the village, it was getting light, so, keeping close to the edge of the hills, we struck up a side nullah, took a slant across it, and then began the climb. By this time it was broad daylight. We kept climbing and gradually working round the face of the hill to the right, until we struck the snow line, and I calculated we were pretty well as high as any sangar the enemy might have on the hill. My idea was to get above them, and I didn't want my party swept into space by a stone avalanche. Still, to make matters secure, I detached ten men to go higher up still, and I had five minutes' halt to give them a start.

It was now about 7.30 A.M., and I wanted to push on, so as to be well on the right rear of the enemy by nine o'clock. Once there, we could time our attack at our leisure. Events, however, worked out somewhat differently. The ground now got very bad, and presently we came to a stone shoot



which extended high up above us, while ending in a cliff a little below. This we crossed carefully, one man going at a time. Each step set the whole slide in motion and brought stones bounding down from above. The best way was to take it at a rush. We got safely across that, and the ground got worse and worse, and finally we were brought to a halt. I sent men to find a path above and below, the remainder sat down under cover, while I examined the ground in front with my glasses. It was eight o'clock now, and I was congratulating myself in having got so far, as another half-mile would bring us on to a spur which ran down on the right flank of the enemy's line.

As I was looking at this spur, I noticed that there was a nice grassy slope just about level with us, and below that the cliffs went almost sheer down into the river. Once on that slope, we could pretty well play skittles with the sangars below, as we could even now see clearly into them. Unfortunately, the ground between looked frightful, a series of ridges like the teeth of a saw, the northern faces being covered with snow, which made the going particularly treacherous. I had

hardly noticed this when there was a puff of smoke and a report, and I saw to my disgust that on the edge of my nice grassy slope were a few clusters of innocent-looking rocks, which I now saw to be sangars, evidently occupied. Just at this moment a man ran across the slope and began waving his coat to some one below, and more men showed themselves among the rocks.

The Levies were still looking for a path, and Humayun wanted to return the enemy's fire; but as the Levies were armed only with carbines, and I hadn't heard the whistle of the enemy's shot, I judged it would be a waste of ammunition. To get the distance, I told Gammer Sing, who had his Martini, to try a shot at the man waving his choga, with his sights at eight hundred yards. I saw the bullet kick the dust to the right of the man, who jumped for a rock, so I knew carbines were no good at that distance.

A path was now found a little lower down, so I ordered an advance and on we went. Our appearance was the signal for the enemy to open fire, but as only one or two bullets sang over us, I knew they couldn't have many rifles. We

worked on steadily forward to about five hundred yards, when shots began to drop among us, so under cover of a ridge I divided the men into two groups, and sent the first group forward under cover of the fire of the second, until the first group reached the next ridge, when they covered the advance of the second group.

The ground was shocking bad, and what made it more annoying was that, as we were attacking towards the north, and the snow lay on the northern slopes, we had to test our way every step, and keep in single file just when our advance was most exposed. I had to have a man in places to help me along. I don't mind bad ground when after mahkor, as you can take your own time, but I strongly object to taking the place of the mahkor. Our advance never stopped, but by ten o'clock we had only gone some two hundred yards, and I could see our force crossing the river on to the plain below.

The enemy in our front now began to get excited, and we saw several of them run back and make signals to those below. There was now only one ridge between us and the enemy,

and we made for it. As we rose, the enemy's fire became pretty warm, but we were soon under cover again, and as our advanced men gained the ridge, they began firing and yelling as hard as they could go. I thought something was up, so made a rush, a slip, and a scramble, and I could see over the ridge as the rear party came scrambling along. I soon saw the cause of the yelling. About a hundred yards in front of us was the grassy ridge, and across this the last of the enemy was bolting, and in a few minutes had disappeared amid the most appalling yells from the Levies. That was the last our party saw of them, for we now found our path again blocked up by a precipice, and again I had to send men above and below to find a practicable way. I then called for a return of casualties, and found we had escaped scot free (I expect the enemy had too). So thus ended our bloodless battle.

While a path was being looked for, Humayun and I sat down in a quiet corner and shared chupatties, and watched the fight below, which was just beginning. First we saw the advance guard get on to the plain and extend, and presently

they were joined by the main body, and the whole formed up for attack ; then the firing line extended and the advance commenced. Presently we saw the sangars open fire, answered by volleys from our men. Then came a larger puff of smoke and a murmur from the men round me, as a shell pitched across the river and burst over a sangar. It was as pretty a sight as one could wish for, and I felt as if I should have been in a stall at Drury Lane.

I could have stopped and watched the show with pleasure. It was quite a treat to see how steadily the 32nd Pioneers worked across the plain ; but just then the men below shouted that they had found a path, while I could see those above working their way on to the grassy slope. These latter now shouted that there were no enemy left on the hill, so we chose the lower road, and gradually worked our way down, joining the grassy spur lower down—only it wasn't grassy here at all, but chiefly precipice. We got down somehow, chiefly on all fours, but by the time we had reached the sangars, the enemy had bolted, and they were occupied by our men. It had taken us nearly an hour to get down. Here I came

across Colonel Kelly, and after shaking hands, I looked at my watch and found it was just twelve, so I had made a good shot at the time of our meeting when we parted in the morning.

Now I will give you an account of the attack carried out by the main body. It is the official account, so I can back its correctness.

The action at Chokalwat on the 9th April is thus described: "On the morning of the ninth April I advanced to the attack of the enemy. In the early morning Lieutenant Beynon, with the Hunza Levies, ascended the high hills on the left bank of the river to turn the right of the position and attack in rear. The Punyal Levies were sent up the hills on the right bank to turn out the men above the stone shoots.

"I advanced in the following manner:—

Half Coy. 32nd Pioneers, advanced guard.

Kashmir Sappers and Miners

Half Company 32nd Pioneers

Two guns 1st Kashmir Mountain

Battery, carried by coolies

One Company 32nd Pioneers

} Main  
Body.

"The baggage, under escort of the rearguard,

remained in Gasht till ordered forward after the action.

“An advance was made to the river, where the bridge had been broken, but sufficiently repaired by the Sappers and Miners for the passage of the infantry. The guns forded the river, and the force ascended to the fan facing the right sangars of the enemy's position.

“The configuration of the ground was as follows: The road from the river after leaving Gasht brought us on to an alluvial fan, the ascent to which was short and steep; it was covered with boulders and intersected with nullahs; the road led across this fan and then along the foot of steep shale slopes and shoots, within five hundred yards of the line of sangars crowning the opposite side of the river bank, and totally devoid of any sort or description of cover for some two miles; it could also be swept by avalanches of stones set in motion by a few men placed on the heights above for that purpose.

“The enemy's position consisted of a line of sangars blocking the roads from the river up to the alluvial fan on which they were placed. The right



Reconnaissance Sketch of the position at Chakalwat.





of the position was protected by a snow glacier, which descended into the river bed, and furthermore by sangars, which extended into the snow line up the spur of the hills.

"The course of the action was as follows: The advanced guard formed up at about eight hundred yards from the position and the main body in rear. The 32nd Pioneers then advanced to the attack. One section, 'C' Company, extended (left of line). One section, 'C' Company, extended in support. Two sections, 'C' Company, 'A' Company, in reserve. The guns now took up position on the right and opened on 'A' sangar at a range of eight hundred and twenty-five yards. As the action progressed, the supporting section of 'C' Company advanced and reinforced. The remaining half of 'C' Company advanced, and, leaving sufficient space for the guns, took up their position in the firing line on the extreme right. Volley firing at first was opened at eight hundred yards, but the firing line advanced one hundred and fifty to two hundred yards as the action progressed. At a later stage, one section of 'A' Company was pushed up to fill a gap on the right of the guns in

action in the centre of the line. The enemy, after receiving some well-directed volleys and correctly played shells, were seen to vacate 'A' sangar by twos and threes until it was finally emptied. During our advance to the fan, shots were heard in the direction of the hills, Lieutenant Beynon having come into contact with the enemy in their sangars up the hillside, who were driven from ridge to ridge. When 'A' sangar was vacated, attention was directed on 'B' sangar, and the same course adopted, with the same result; at the same time those driven down from the hills above streamed into the plain, and there was then a general flight. Six shrapnel were fired into the flying enemy at ranges of a thousand, twelve hundred, and thirteen hundred and fifty yards (three rounds per gun).

"A general advance was then made down precipitous banks to the bed of the river, covered by the fire of the reserves, the river forded, and sangars 'A' and 'B' occupied. The guns were then carried across, and, the whole line of sangars having been vacated, the column was re-formed on the fan; the line taken in crossing enabled the enemy to get well on their way to Mastuj; the

advance was then continued to a village a mile and a half farther along the river, where a halt was made. The casualties consisted of one man of the 32nd Pioneers severely wounded, and three Kashmir Sappers slightly. The action commenced at 10.30 A.M. and lasted one hour. The position was of unusual natural strength, and the disposition of the sangars showed considerable tactical ability, being placed on the edge of high cliffs on the left bank of the river. The enemy were computed at four to five hundred, and were armed with Martini-Henry and Snider rifles. Several dead were found in the sangars, and the losses I estimate to have been from fifty to sixty."

By the time I had joined Colonel Kelly, the Pioneers had re-formed and were advancing, so I had very little time to take a look at the sangars. I saw one or two bodies lying around, and the shells seemed to have knocked sparks pretty successfully out of the stone breastworks. I also noticed the neat little cooking places the enemy had made behind their sangars, showing that they had been there for some time.

The advance was carried on without a check for

about one and a half miles, when we came to a cluster of huts near the termination of the plain, the river here making a slight sweep towards the left side of the valley. An advance guard was thrown out well to the front, and under their protection the column halted and the men fell out. I had a first-class thirst by this time, and Gammer Sing made several trips to the river before it was quenched. Gammer Sing and I always share the same tin mug on the march. It is his mug, but he always gives me first go. In return I supply Gammer Sing with tobacco, so it is a fair division of labour. Here I finished my chupatties, and some kind man—I think it was Borradaile—gave me a stick of chocolate, my own store having run out, but I managed to get it replenished at Mastuj.

Good old Stewart came up as pleased as Punch at having had his first fight. Said he, "And d'ye think now that me shells killed many of the beggars? sure and their corpses ought to be just thick." He was pained to hear that in all probability we should not catch up the enemy again that day, I really think nothing less than twelve hours' hard fighting

every day, with short intervals for refreshments, would satisfy him.

One of the guns, when being brought up the cliff, had slipped off the coolies and fallen down to the bottom again, breaking off the foresight, but Stewart mended it during the halt.

At the same time, the Sappers were hard at work pulling down a house for materials to build a bridge, but before it was actually begun, we heard that the river could be forded again lower down, so the bridge was not built. By this time the men were sufficiently rested, the whole column had closed up, and orders sent back for the baggage to come on.

Off we started, the Punyal Levies working down the right bank, the Hunzas on the left, the main column following the left bank of the stream. By 4 P.M. we reached the ford and crossed to the right bank, the water not being much above our knees. And almost immediately after, we saw some men drawn up on the spur we were approaching ; they turned out to be the Mastuj garrison, who, on finding the besieging force halting, had come out to find out the reason. If they had only heard our guns and turned out at once, they would have cut

the line of retreat of our opponents, and the whole crew must have been wiped out. Unfortunately the fort of Mastuj is built far down the reverse slope of a fan, and although some of the sentries reported they heard firing, it was thought they must be mistaken.

By 5 P.M. we had got on to the spur, and found Moberly, with part of the garrison, all looking very fat and fit; evidently the siege had not worried them much so far. A detachment of the 14th Sikhs (the remains of Ross's company) were left on the spur to cover the baggage coming in, while our column trotted down to the fort, getting there by 5.30 P.M. Here we found Jones with his arm in a sling. Our force bivouacked in a garden attached to the fort, the trees of which had been lopped to deprive the enemy of shelter, and the farther wall destroyed. This we precious soon built up again, and within an hour our force was comfortably entrenched and cooking its dinner.

What a blessing it was to be down again in a decent climate! Fires were still pleasant at night, but in the daytime the bright, cool weather was splendid.

Moberly's servant soon had some tea and chupatties ready, and while we were eating them, Bretherton, who had been out clearing some village on the other side of the fort, came in.

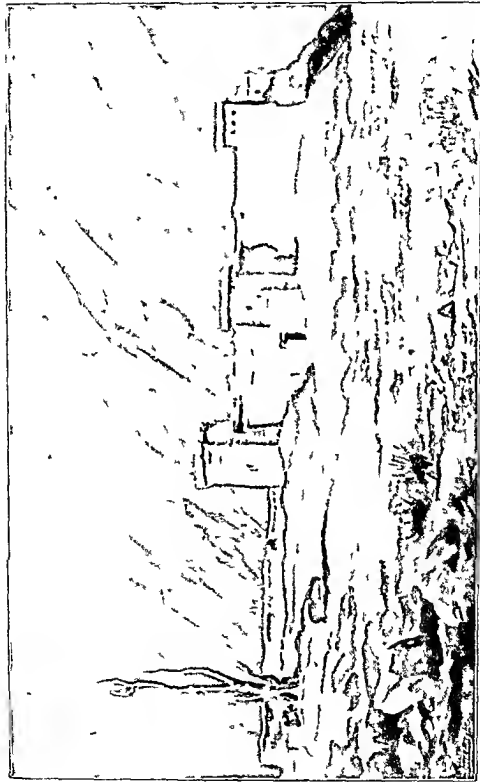
There was lots of news, both to hear and relate, and we were hard at it when there came the sound of a volley from the direction in which we were expecting the baggage.

Somebody said, "Cuss those niggers! why can't they let us have our tea in peace?"—it wasn't Stewart,—and there was a general scramble for swords and belts. A company of the Pioneers was soon doubling off, while the rest of us strolled up the road to see what the row was. We met the baggage coming in, and heard that the 14th Sikh picket had heard some people moving in the river bed, and had let drive a volley at them—result unknown. As soon as the last of the baggage had passed, we followed it, and the picket was withdrawn. Later that night we sent back a messenger with an account of the day's fighting and the relief of Mastuj to Gilgit, but the messenger—a levy—shortly returned, having been fired on, and returned the fire, so it was evident that a



good many of the enemy were still sneaking about.

We officers slept in the fort that night, four or five of us in a room. Mastuj is of the ordinary type of country fort, square, with a tower at each end and one over the gateway, curtains between each tower about eighteen to twenty feet high, and the towers another fifteen feet higher still. The whole place is built of layers of stones and wood plastered together with mud, while there is generally a keep or citadel inside which commands the rest of the fort, and in which are the governor's and women's quarters. In Mastuj, of course, we used these as officers' quarters. The whole fort is a horribly dirty and tumble-down old place; the roof of the officers' quarters had to be propped up, as it was considered unsafe, and I quite believe it. The rooms had the usual hole in the roof for the smoke to get out at, but Moberly had erected a stove in his room, which was a great improvement.



Mastuj Fort



## CHAPTER VI

### THE RECONNAISSANCE FROM MASTUJ

WHILE at Mastuj we heard from Jones the story of the disaster at Koragh—which I will give.

Ross, with Jones and about ninety-three Sikhs, left Mastuj on the 7th March, with the intention of helping Edwardes and Fowler, who were believed to be in danger at Reshun, and marched to Buni; leaving a detachment there of thirty-three sepoy's under a native officer, he marched with Jones and sixty men for Reshun, hoping to arrive there that day.

After leaving Buni, the road runs for some distance along flat ground until the junction of the Turikho and Yarkhun rivers is reached. At this point the road leads up along the face of a cliff and

then down on to a small plain, where are a few houses and some patches of cultivation. This is known as the village of Koragh, and immediately after, the river runs between the cliffs, which draw together and make the mouth of the defile. The path which follows the left bank crosses the débris fallen from the cliffs above and then runs along the edge of the river at the foot of another and smaller cliff, or in summer, when the river is full, the path runs over this smaller cliff. Ross's party took the lower road. After the second cliff the paths lead on to a small plain about two hundred yards wide at its greatest width, and perhaps half a mile long, and then runs up and across the face of a third cliff which drops sheer down into the river. This cliff forms the end of the trap. It would be hard to find a better place for an ambushade.

Ross's advance guard was on this plain, approaching the spur which closes the trap, when they were fired on. Ross went forward to reconnoitre the ground, and at once saw the impossibility of driving the enemy out with his small force, and therefore ordered Jones to go back and hold the entrance of the defile to enable them

to escape. On the first shot being fired, the coolies had chucked their loads and bolted, as likely as not helping to man the sangars enclosing the party. Jones, taking ten men, made an attempt to reach the mouth of the defile, but found it already occupied by the enemy, who had run up stone sangars, and by the time he had got within a hundred yards of it, eight of his ten men were wounded. He therefore fell back on the main party, who had taken refuge in some caves at the foot of the cliff.

The caves, now half full of water, owing to the rising of the river, can be seen in the photograph. The party remained in these caves till 9 p.m., when they made another attempt to cut their way out, but were driven back by avalanches of stones. They then had to scale the mountainside, but were stopped by an impossible cliff, and one sepoy, falling over, was killed, so they came back to the caves dead tired. Here they remained the whole of the next day, the enemy trying an occasional shot from across the river, where they had erected sangars; but the Sikhs had, in their turn, built sangars across the mouth of their cave, which sheltered them.

Then the enemy tried rolling stones over the top of the cliff, but this only had the effect of strengthening the sangars, so they shut that up.

During that day, Ross and Jones came to the conclusion that there was nothing to be done but cut their way out ; everyone must take his chance, the rush to be made about 2 A.M. On the morning of the 10th, accordingly, at the time fixed, they made their sortie.

A heavy fire was at once opened on them from both sides of the river, while avalanches of stones were sent hurtling down the cliffs. A number of sepoy were killed or knocked senseless by stones, but the remainder reached the sangars, and cleared out the defenders at the point of the bayonet. Here poor Ross was killed by a bullet through the head, after having, so the natives say, pistolled some four of the enemy. The latter, after being driven out of the sangars, bolted up the hillside, and again opened fire from among the rocks. By the time the small band reached the maidan, there were only some seventeen men, headed by Jones : of these, Jones and nine others were wounded.

Here the little party formed up, and tried to help any more of their friends who might be struggling through, by heavy volley-firing into the sangars on both sides of the river. After some ten minutes of thus waiting, during which they twice drove off attacks of the enemy's swordsmen, who tried to close with them, and losing three more men, Jones, noticing an attempt of the enemy to cut the line of retreat, and despairing of any more of the detachment escaping, gave the order to retire. This was carried out slowly and leisurely till they reached Buni, at about 6 A.M., when they joined the detachment they had left behind. Jones and his party remained in Buni till the 17th, the enemy not daring to attack them, and they were unable to move, having no transport for their wounded.

After Ross had left Mastuj, Moberly remained in command of the fort, and on the 10th March was joined by Captain Bretherton of the Commissariat, who came in with two sepoy from Ghizr.

Moberly heard that Ross had left a small party at Buni, and though he sent messengers to this



party, he never received any reply, the messengers probably being captured.

On the 13th, hearing that the enemy were occupying the Nisa Gol, a position some six miles from Mastuj, he reconnoitred up to it, and found some sangars, which he destroyed, but no enemy.

A reinforcement of sixty sepoy came in that day from Ghizr. The next two days were spent in trying to collect coolies for transport, and on the 16th, in spite of the non-arrival of any coolies, he set out to Buni with a hundred and fifty sepoy, each man carrying a sheepskin coat, two blankets, a hundred and twenty rounds of ammunition, and three days' cooked rations.

He halted that night at Sanoghar, where he collected some fifty coolies, and learned by signal from Mastuj that Bretherton was sending some fifty Yarkhun coolies the next day—fifty Punyal Levies also joined him that evening. Starting the next morning, he reached Buni by 5 P.M., when he found Jones and the remains of the Sikhs. The return journey was begun two hours later, at 7 P.M., and carried on steadily all night, a small body of the enemy following, but not daring to attack.

Mastuj was reached between 10 and 11 A.M. the next day, 18th March.

By the 22nd March the enemy had surrounded the fort, and the siege began. Nothing of any event happened, the enemy contenting themselves with long-range firing, only one man being slightly wounded and two ponies killed. On the 9th of April "up we came with our little lot," and the siege was raised.

Early the next morning we were up and going through the state of the supplies and available amount of transport.

Transport and supplies were an everlasting source of worry, as it generally is with every army, great or small.

We soon got a return of the supplies in Mastuj. I forget how many days it was, but none too much for our force and the Mastuj garrison. Bretherton was sent back to bring up supplies from the rear, and messengers were sent to order in the villagers. We wanted their grain to eat, and men to carry it. The villagers began to come in after a bit, and brought a small amount of grain with them.

Stewart was hard at work getting ponies for

his guns in place of the mules left behind ; the gun wheel and carriage saddles were sent for, and shortly arrived.

The Levies were billeted in the houses which had lately been occupied by the enemy, and we soon had pickets out round the fort. In showing the Levies the houses they were to occupy, I examined the enemy's system of loopholes and sangars, and found they were very well made indeed. In the house which had lately been occupied by Mahomed Issar, their commander-in-chief, we found the trunk of a tree which the enemy were converting into a cannon. It didn't require cannon to bring the walls of Mastuj down,—a good strong kick would have been quite sufficient. Shortly after we had reached Chitral, Moberly reported that part of the wall had fallen on a sleeping sepoy, who was luckily saved by some beams catching and protecting him from being crushed by the débris. There was no apparent cause for the collapse, but the man is supposed to have sneezed.

The next day a fatigue party was sent out to Chokalwat to destroy the enemy's sangars, and

bury any dead bodies that might be lying about. This party would also act as a covering party to Peterson, who was expected to arrive that day. With Peterson came Bethune and Luard, all very sick at having missed a fight. This detachment brought the strength of the Pioneers up to four hundred rifles.

The Hunza and fifty Punyal Levies were sent to reconnoitre towards Nisa Gol that day, and fifty more Punyals up the Yarkhun valley to forage. The rest of the day was spent in writing reports, making out official returns, and other necessary nuisances.

Colonel Kelly and I were writing in a tent pitched on the roof, and I had pretty well got through my work by 5 P.M.; and then Colonel Kelly had out the maps and returns of supplies, etc., and, Borradaile being called, there was a small council of war.

As I have before said, Colonel Kelly had practically settled at Pingal to advance by Killa Drasan, but the question was, when should we be in a position to do so? Here came in that everlasting transport and supply question. We could

now, of course, cut down our baggage by leaving behind warm clothes and poshteens, as the weather would be getting hotter every day as we descended to lower latitudes ; but this only meant that the men would have to carry less themselves, and, try as we would, it seemed as if we could only raise enough transport for seven days' supplies, five on coolies and two days in the men's haversacks. It was seven days' march to Chitral by the direct route, and though our intelligence pointed to the fact that supplies in the Chitral fort were probably plentiful, it was yet only summer. Then, again, we might, or we might not, get supplies on the road. We worried the question up and down and inside out, but we couldn't increase the transport by one coolie. Borradaile was for going on. I said, "The first man in Chitral gets a C.B."

Just then Raja Akbar Khan and Humayun came back, so we went out to hear their report. Old Akbar smiled a fat smile all over his face, and Humayun twirled his long moustache,—he has a fine black beard and moustache and a deep bass voice. Akbar Khan curls his beard like an Assyrian king, and smiles good-naturedly at everything.

They reported that they had seen the enemy building sangars, and that there were many men, also cavalry. Their report was clear enough, and from their description I could pretty well place the position of the different sangars, as I had been over the ground with Harley on my previous visit to Chitral. To make matters certain, I suggested that I should reconnoitre the position next day. This was agreed to, and it was also determined to attack the enemy on the 13th April, as it was no use giving them time to entrench themselves more than we could help.

I started off about 9 A.M. on the morning of the 12th April, mounted on a transport pony. I had about fifty Hunza and Punyal Levies, under Humayun and Akbar Khan, with me ; these two also had ponies, Akbar Khan having managed to get two over the pass with great difficulty. It was a lovely morning, and we were all very cheerful except Gammer Sing, who wanted to come along with me ; but as he had to get my kit sorted and put right for the next day's march, I left him behind, but took his rifle and ammunition.

We dropped over the bluff and forded the

Laspur stream, which was hardly over the men's knees, and then kept along the bed of the river, with a few scouts well up the hills on our left, the Mastuj or Yarkhun river protecting our right. After about two miles we came to a small homestead, and Humayun told me there was a wounded man inside; so in I went, and found the poor beggar with his right leg smashed by a bullet just above the knee. There were a lot of women and children and two men in the house, his brothers, so I gave them a note to Luard, and told them to carry the man into Mastuj, which they did. Luard set his leg, and by this time he is no doubt well and happy.

Shortly after that, we climbed up from the bed of the river on to a narrow ledge which ran along the foot of the hills about two hundred feet above the river. Here we left our horses, and went scrambling along among the fallen débris for about half a mile, when we came to the foot of a stone slope, and I noticed our advanced guard had halted on the top, and on asking the reason, Humayun said that the enemy were occupying the next spurs. So up we went, and found the fact true enough, but

the next spur was some thousand yards away ; so on we went across that slope, and on to the next, eventually reaching a very nice little place some eight hundred yards from the spur occupied by the enemy.

From here I could see pretty well the whole of the position occupied by the enemy, except the end of the Nisa Gol nullah where it debouches on to the river. I tried going up the hill, but that only made matters worse, so I determined to sketch what I could see from here, and then try across the river. In order not to be interrupted, I sent five men well up the hill on to a spur, from whence they could see any man who tried to sneak up for a shot, and spread out the rest in skirmishing order to my front. Humayun and Akbar got behind a rock and went to sleep, and I got out my telescope and set to work.

The enemy seemed rather interested in our proceedings—we could see their heads bobbing up and down behind the sangars ; but after we had settled down, they gradually took courage, and, coming outside, sat down to watch us. This was very nice of them, for very soon I had a complete



list of the garrison of each sangar, and from where I was could see the sort of gun they were armed with,—a few rifles among the lower sangars, and nearly all matchlocks among the higher and more inaccessible ones. It was a calm, peaceful scene: the enemy sitting outside their sangars sunning themselves; and my men lying down, a few watching, the rest sleeping, one or two enjoying a friendly pipe.

Shortly after, we saw two gallant young sparks come riding along the plain on the opposite side of the river, evidently having been sent by the general to report on our proceedings. They pulled up opposite us and watched us for a short time, and then one slipped off his horse, which was led by the other behind a big boulder. Thinking they would merely watch us, I shouted to my men to keep an eye on them, and went on sketching. Presently there was a bang, and ping came a bullet over our heads. The beggar was potting at us at about a thousand yards, unpardonable waste of ammunition! I put a rock between us, and went on sketching, everyone else did ditto, and presently our friend shut up, but after a time, finding things

slow, I suppose, he began again. This seemed to annoy Humayun, who asked for the loan of my rifle, and he and Akbar went dodging down the hill. They disappeared behind a dip in the ground, and presently I saw them come out lower down among some bushes, and gradually they worked their way down to the edge of the river about eight hundred yards from our friend, who was calmly sitting in the open, having occasional pot shots at us, while his friend had come out and was evidently criticising the performance.

Presently there was a bang from our side of the river, and a spurt of dust on the opposite maidan where the bullet struck. Humayun had over-judged the distance. By the time he was ready for another shot, our two friends were legging it across the plain as fast as their ponies could gallop. He got in a couple of shots more, but they did not hurt anybody.

As soon as Humayun commenced firing, the sangars in our front began humming like a beehive, and presently shot after shot came dropping among us; the enemy evidently had plenty of ammunition, and for some minutes things were quite

lively; but, finding we made no response, they calmed down gradually, and peace once more reigned supreme.

I chaffed old Humayun, when he came back, on his shooting powers, and he grinned in response.

I now noticed rather a commotion among the garrison of the sangars across the Nisa Gol nullah; the men began turning out, and one or two ran towards the higher sangars, evidently passing on some news. Presently I saw a crowd of men, mostly mounted, with others on foot carrying flags. Then came a fat man in white, with a standard-bearer all to himself. All the garrisons of the sangars turned out, and I counted them—there were over a hundred in each.

The commander-in-chief rode up the whole length of the nullah, and then walked up the spur on which are shown sangars Nos. 16 and 17 in the sketch. Here he sat down, and, I have no doubt, calculated the odds on his winning when the action came off. After a time he came down the hill, and the procession moved down along the nullah and out of sight.

When I had finished my sketch, I shut up my telescope and said—

"Now we'll go across the river."

"Why do you want to cross the river?" said Humayun.

"I want to see the end of the nullah," said I.

"Their cavalry will get you," said he.

"What cavalry?" said I.

"You've just seen two of them," said he.

"Get out!" said I; "you're pulling my leg."

"Don't go," said he.

"I'm going," said I.

"Where the Sahib goes, I follow," said he.

"Come on, Ruth," said I. "'Whither thou goest, I will go!' I've heard that remark before."

These hillmen have an extraordinarily exaggerated idea of cavalry. Any young buck on a long-tailed screw is a Chevalier Bayard to them. Why, you've only to move ten yards to your right or left in any part of the country, and no cavalry could reach you, while you could sit and chuck stones at them.

Down we dropped again into the river bed, leaving a few men to signal any movement of the

enemy while we were crossing. We had our ponies brought up and rode across the stream, the men fording, then we scrambled up the high slope of the opposite bank and shouted for the remainder to follow.

A short distance up the hill, and I could see the end of the nullah, with a large sangar covering the road. This was what I wished to know, so, after a careful look, having seen all I wanted, we started homewards by the opposite bank to that by which we had come, crossing the river again by a bridge which Oldham had been employed the day before in mending, and reached Mastuj by 1 P.M.

I gave in my report to Colonel Kelly, and then got out orders for the next day's march.

I also suggested that some light scaling ladders should be made, as I expected we should find them very useful in crossing the Nisa Gol. Accordingly, Oldham set his Sappers to work, and by evening had ten light scaling ladders ready, each about ten feet long, and light enough to be carried by one man.

A certain amount of supplies and some coolies had been collected. The guns had been mounted

on ponies, and could now march along faster than when carried by coolies.

Everything was ready for an early advance the next morning, so as a little diversion we were photographed by Moberly. Moberly was coming out the next day in command of a company of Kashmir troops; after the expected fight, he would return to Mastuj to resume command, and the Kashmir troops would be put under my charge.

The orders for next day were to march at 7 A.M., baggage to remain in Mastuj till sent for, and then to come out under escort of part of the garrison, who would escort back any wounded we might have, Luard coming out in charge of the field hospital and returning with the wounded to form a base hospital at Mastuj.

I managed to get a bottle of whisky out of Moberly. It belonged, I believe, to Fowler, but as he was either a prisoner or dead, he wouldn't require the whisky. I also replenished my store of chocolate.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FIGHT AT NISA GOL

NEXT morning, 13th April, we were all having a good square breakfast by 6 A.M., and punctually at seven o'clock the column moved off, headed by the Levies.

Our force consisted of—

400 Pioneers,

100 Kashmir Infantry,

40 Kashmir Sappers,

2 Mountain guns,

100 Hunza and Punyal Levies ;

rather less than a single battalion, and not much with which to force our way through seventy miles of bad country, but still we were determined to get to Chitral before the Peshawur force.

It was a perfect morning, nice bright sunshine,

and a jolly fresh feeling in the air, sort of day that makes you want to take a gun and go shooting ; in fact, just the very day for a fight.

The Levies were across Oldham's bridge in no time, but the Pioneers had to cross it slowly, as it was very jumpy, and only four men could be allowed on it at a time. The guns were sent up to a ford some three hundred yards up the stream. After crossing the main stream there was still a creek to be forded, but this was not much above the men's knees. This gave the Levies time to get ahead and send some scouts up the hills to the right, in order to give timely warning if the enemy should try on the rolling stone dodge, but the hills just here did not lend themselves very readily to this mode of warfare. When our little army got across the river, the advance guard was halted and the column formed up, and then on we went. Peterson was in command of the advance guard, with orders to halt when he reached the edge of the plain to allow the column to close up for the attack. On the order to advance he was to hug the hill on his right.

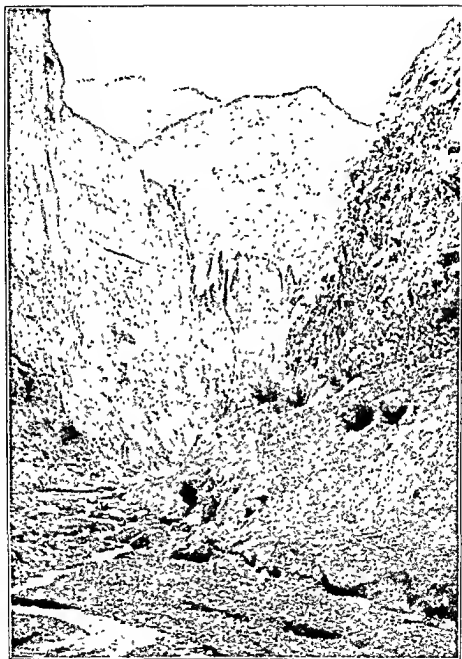
Just before the maidan the road drops down on to the river bed, and then runs up on to the maidan



itself, which gradually slopes up to the centre, where it is divided by a deep nullah that I think they call in America a cañon. The sides of this nullah are in most places perpendicular, varying from two hundred and fifty to three hundred feet in depth, with a small stream running along the bottom, the amount of water depending on the melting of the snow in the hills above. There are two places to cross it, one the regular road to Chitral, which zig-zags down the nullah near the mouth, and the other a goat track about half-way between the road and the hills. Both of these had sangars covering their approach on the enemy's side of the nullah, and any attempt to rush them would have led to great loss of life.

To the casual observer the plain looks perfectly flāt, but as a matter of fact the slope is rather more pronounced at the foot than at the top near the hills, with the result that from the sangar covering the main road, the upper end of the plain is partially hidden from fire.

The plain also is really a succession of what may be described as waves running parallel with the nullah, which afford very excellent shelter to



Looking up the Nisa Gol Nullah.



any attacking force. In fact, the only obstacle is the nullah; but, as you may see from the photos, this obstacle is no small one, and could only be crossed by two paths as far as we knew. Our object was to find another path, and to get to close quarters with the enemy.

So much for the ground: now for the fight. Peterson and the Levies got on to the maidan and extended, while the main body formed up for attack. Then the order to advance was given, and off we went.

Peterson and the Levies were in the firing line and extended, the Levies on the right.

As the remaining companies reached the level plain, they first formed into line and went forward in the regular everyday style. The ground was very nice for parade movements, a gentle, grassy slope with plenty of room. The Levies, however, were not keeping close enough to the hillside, and were gradually pushing Peterson's company off to the left, where they would have been exposed to the fire of the big sangar plus the flanking fire from the sangars up the spur on the left bank of the river.

Colonel Kelly accordingly sent me off to change their direction more to the right, and to close the Levies until they were wanted. I found Humayun's pony taking shelter under a rock, so, mounting it, I galloped after Peterson, gave him the order, and then closed the Levies on their right. This made a gap into which we of the supporting companies pushed, so now we had two companies in the firing line, two in support, and the Kashmir Company in reserve. In this formation we pushed on till we came under fire of the sangars, and had reached the valley running up into the hills, about four hundred yards from the nullah, thus again giving room for the Levies to form line on the right of the Pioneers.

The fun now began as the enemy started plugging away at us from the sangars on the spur, but not much at present from the lower ones, as only the flank of Peterson's company could be seen.

Stewart had got his guns into action and was shelling sangar No. 16. After a time Peterson engaged the sangars on the maidan, and they gave him a pretty warm time of it.

The Levies opened fire at three hundred yards,

rather close range to begin an action, and it was very amusing watching them; their instruction in volley-firing had only just been begun, but they had entire faith in its efficiency.

The section commanders used to give the word to load in their own language, but the order to fire was "*fira vollee*," and they were supposed to fire on the word "*vollee*." If any man fired before the order,—and they frequently did,—the section commander used to rush at the culprit and slap him severely on the nearest part of him. As the Levies were lying down, the slaps were—on the usual place.

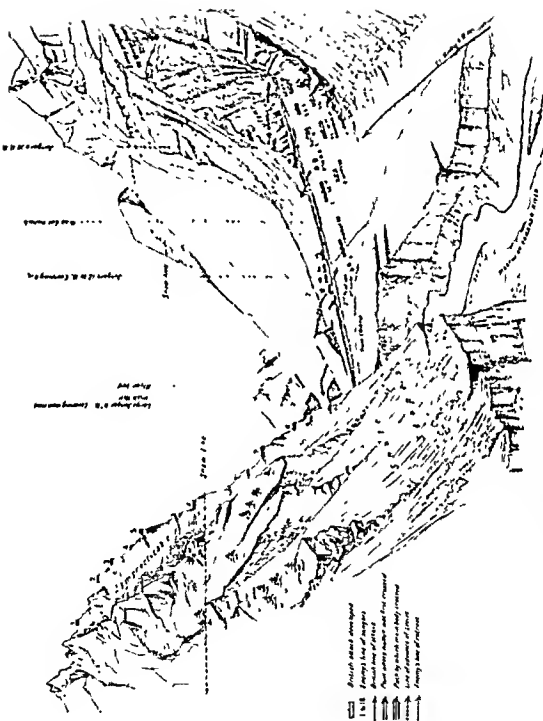
After a time the fire from the sangar slackened, and as things seemed to be going all right, I stopped the Levies firing, and, taking two of them, went forward up to the edge of the nullah to see if there was any sign of a road. We followed the edge upwards for some two hundred yards, and then I told the two levies to go on until they found a place, and then went back.

The fire from the sangar had recommenced, as Stewart's attention had been turned towards others, so Colonel Kelly sent orders to Stewart to send in one or two more shells, which had the desired effect.

I now sent Gammer Sing to get a fresh supply of ammunition for the Levies, which he brought, and I then followed Colonel Kelly down the line to the Pioneers. In the meantime the guns had changed their position, and were engaged with the lower sangars, as was also Peterson, who, I think, was under the hottest fire the whole time, as he had the attention of two big sangars entirely paid to him. The guns also got hit a bit, and among others two of the drivers were killed; they were the owners of the gun ponies, and remained with the ponies under a guard of four Kashmir sepoy, who had commands to shoot any man trying to bolt. They and their ponies of course made a large target, but the ponies also acted as a protection. One more of the Pioneer companies now came into the firing line, and these three companies devoted their entire attention to one sangar, whose fire was now very intermittent.

I now got Colonel Kelly's leave to go and look for a path, and hailed Oldham to come and help me work forward therefore in front of the firing line, to do which we had to ask Borradaile to stop one company firing, which he very kindly did. We

Reconnaissance Sketch of the position at Nisa Gol.







struck the nullah close opposite the empty sangar No. 15, and from there followed the edge till we were well within sight of the sangars in the middle of the madia, without having found a place where we could get down, but we noticed a track which led up the opposite bank. We therefore turned back and retraced our steps till we came to a spot which we had examined before, but had thought impossible. Where we stood the drop was sheer for some seventy feet, but then there came a ledge, from which we thought we could scramble down on to the bed of the stream and up the opposite side, where we had noticed the track. We therefore hurried back: Oldham for his Sappers, and I to report to Colonel Kelly. I likewise asked for the reserve company of Kashmir troops to cross over as soon as a path could be made under cover of the fire of the already extended companies of the Pioneers. Colonel Kelly assented, and I sent off a note to Moberly to bring up his company. When I got back to the nullah, I found the Pioneers extended along the edge, and Oldham's Sappers already at work.

The Levies in the meantime had heard of a path

higher up in the hills, and were sent off to cross as best they could. Having nothing more to do, I sat down where Oldham's men were at work, and watched the proceedings. The men in No. 16 sangar had evidently had enough of it, their sangar having been pretty well knocked about their ears, and when any of the survivors tried a shot, it called down a volley on him. Presently they began to bolt, and then the laugh was on our side.

That sangar was a death-trap to its garrison—their only line of escape was across some open, shaley slopes within four hundred yards of our firing line, and the Levies were now working along the hill, and would catch them in the sangar if they didn't clear out. The result was like rabbit shooting. You'd see a man jump from the sangar and bolt across the shale slope, slipping and scrambling as he went; then there would be a volley, and you'd see the dust fly all round him—perhaps he'd drop, perhaps he wouldn't; then there would be another volley, and you'd see him chuck forward amid a laugh from the sepoys, and he'd roll over and over till he'd fetch up against a rock and lie still. Sometimes two or three would bolt at once; one or two would

drop at each volley, and go rolling, limp and shapeless, down the slope, until they were all down, and there would be a wait for the next lot. An old sepoy lying near me declared as each man dropped that it was his particular rifle whose aim had been so accurate, until Borrardile called him sharply to order, and told him to attend to business. Presently a crowd of men appeared higher up on the same spur, and someone called out that they were Levies. Just then one of them dropped on his knee and fired in our direction, there was a volley back, and the men disappeared again.

Oldham had now managed, with ropes and the scaling ladders, to get down on to the ledge below, so calling to Moberly to bring along his company, I dived down, followed by Gannier Sing and then Moberly, and one or two men of the Sappers followed him, and we, thinking the whole company was coming, went scrambling down to the bottom. We slid down the ropes on to the ladders, and from them on to the ledge, followed it a bit along the cliff, and then down a shale and débris slope to the stream, across that and up the other side. Scrambling on all fours up the opposite side, I heard

Oldham, who was ahead of me, shout back that the company wasn't following. I yelled, "Run up a sangar, and we can hold on till they come," and finished my scramble up to the top.

Then we took a look round to see how things stood.

Devil a sign of the company coming down the rope was there, and the Pioneers seemed to have disappeared too.

Then we numbered our party—three British officers, my orderly, and eleven Sappers, the latter armed with Snider carbines only ; my orderly was the only one with a bayonet. There was a low ridge in front of us hiding the enemy's sangars, so we lined this with the Sappers, till we could see what the game was. We now saw the Pioneers moving down the nullah towards the river, while at the same time the Levies showed on the ridge and took possession of the sangar. We were all right, I saw, so I gave the order to advance—keeping along the edge of the nullah so as to get at the sangars. Of course just my luck that as we started to advance, the buckle of my chuplie broke ; there was no time to mend it, so I shoved it into my

haversack, and went along with one bare foot; luckily the ground was not very stony.

As soon as we topped the swell of the ground, we saw the enemy bolting in twos and threes from the nearest sangar, now about two hundred yards off, and presently there came a rush right across our front. We opened fire, trying volleys at first, but the Sappers were useless at that, never having had any training, so independent firing was ordered. During the halt Moberly had a narrow shave, a bullet passing between his left hand and thigh, as he was standing superintending the firing. His hand was almost touching his thigh, and the bullet raised the skin of the palm just below the little finger.

The nearest sangar was now pretty well empty, and the Pioneers from the other side of the nullah were firing obliquely across our front, rather too close to be pleasant; so we altered our advance half right, so as to cut into the line of retreat of the enemy, and made for a jumble of stones out in the open; by the time we reached it, there was a stream of men flying right across our front, horse and foot, at about five hundred yards, so again we

opened fire. Moberly and I both took carbines from the men, as they were firing wildly ; the sepoy whose carbine I took invariably managed to jam the cartridge, partly his fault, and partly the fault of the worn state of the extractor. Gammer Sing was plugging in bullets quietly on my right, and gave me the distance as five hundred yards. I knew he was pretty correct, as I watched his bullets pitch. I sang out the distance, and we got merrily to work. Oh, if I had only had a company of my regiment, I think even Stewart would have been satisfied. Precious soon the rush had passed us, and we had to begin putting up our sights, and of course then the cream of the business was over.

About this time Shah Mirza came along, and, seeing me with only one chuplie, offered me his, which I accepted, as it was a matter of indifference to him whether he went barefooted or not. I sent him off to bring up the Levies, who were looting the arms and securing the prisoners from the sangars.

Cobbe now appeared with some few Pioneers, and shortly after, a whole company, but the enemy were now quite out of sight ; however, a company

was sent in pursuit. Colonel Kelly came up, and we congratulated him, and there was a general demand for cigarettes, Moberly, I believe, being the happy possessor of some. As we were grouped round Colonel Kelly, "whit" came a bullet over us, some idiot up the hill leaving his P.P.C. card, I presume.

One of the first questions I asked was, what had become of the Kashmir Company, and then first heard the following curious incident.

It appears that after the first few of us had gone down the cliff, and the rest were preparing to follow, a bullet struck some cakes of gun-cotton lying on the ground by the head of the path, where they had been placed while the Sappers were at work. The bullet, striking these cakes, ignited them, and they blazed up, and Borradaile, fearing an explosion, ordered a retirement of those troops nearest it to cover some thirty yards in rear, where they were protected by a wave of the ground. The enemy, seeing our men bolting, as they thought, rushed out of their sangars, but were promptly fired into by the Pioneers. Just then the Levies on the ridge and our small party showed across the



nullah, threatening their line of retreat; this was apparently more than they had bargained for, so they began to bolt, as I have said. Then the Pioncers moved down the nullah and crossed by the goat track.

Peterson's company had found a box full of Snider ammunition in one of the sangars, so the Kashmir Company was sent back to look for any more, and also to demolish the sangars. I took the opportunity to have a look at them too. I was surprised at the magnificent way in which they were built, partly sunk into the ground, and made of huge boulders that required many men to move, and with head cover constructed of logs in the most approved fashion, evidently made by men who had been properly instructed. As I neared the largest sangar, I saw a native clothed in a red dressing-gown, sitting on the ground with a long native jezail. Rather surprised at seeing one of the enemy thus armed, I went up to him, and as I did so, he picked up his gun. I had my revolver on him in a second, and told him to drop the gun, which he did. I then asked him who he was, and found he was our long-lost child—I mean levy—

who had been captured at Laspur. The enemy had not treated him badly, but had taken his carbine and his choga, hence the dressing-gown; in return he had sneaked a gun when the enemy were flying. I set the Kashmir troops to work, and then went back, meeting Humayun and his captives on the way.

"Humayun," I said, "your levy is over there."

"Is he alive?" said Humayun, looking in a most bloodthirsty way at his prisoners.

I assured him he was. Thereupon Humayun gave a jump, caught hold of both my hands, and kissed them violently. I was afraid he was going to kiss my ruby lips, but he didn't. He and Akbar Khan then went scuttling across country to the sangar, followed by a crowd of his men, whooping and yelling with joy.

The guns were now coming across the nullah, and the column was being formed up with the intention of crossing the river to Sanoghar, where it was proposed to camp for the night. Part of the Levies and a company of the Pioneers were sent ahead to clear the village of any evilly disposed persons; arrangements were made for bringing up the sick

and wounded; and a signal message was flashed back to Mastuj for the baggage to come out.

The fight was over by 12.30 P.M., so we had only been about two hours from start to finish. Our losses were six killed and sixteen wounded, two of whom died next day. Three of the battery ponies were also killed.

The path down to the river was so steep and the rickety bridge over it so unsafe that it was determined to camp on the side of the river on which we were, especially as we should have to recross the next day.

A camping ground was soon found, pickets thrown out, and the wounded brought in.

A deputation from Sanoghar village was now seen coming across from the opposite bank. Most of the deputation on arrival seemed half naked; we thought this was a sign of humility on their part, but I heard afterwards that the Levies had come across them, and taken their chogas in exchange for that of their man in the red dressing-gown.

This deputation gave the usual yarn about being compelled to fight against us, and how glad they were that we had won.

We made our usual reply, that they could and must show their gladness by providing coolies and supplies, all of which would be paid for. We also made them send over charpoys (beds) for the wounded.

We had taken some twelve prisoners, who came in useful as transport; in fact, until we got to Chitral every man we caught was turned into a beast of burden and given a load; and if he was an Adamzada, or nobleman, he was given the heaviest load that we could find for him, oftentimes much to the delight of the poorer coolies, as an Adamzada is exempt from coolie labour in ordinary times.

The coolies used to bolt at every opportunity, which was only natural, and there was not much difficulty in doing so. As often as not, we got into camp after dark, when the coolie simply put down his load and walked off; but as our supplies diminished, we naturally required fewer coolies—at any rate, we managed to get all our baggage into Chitral.

Moberly now handed over the company of Kashmir troops to my tender charge and departed back to Mastuj, so now I had the command of the

Levies and one company added to my numerous other duties, so generally I was pretty well on the hop.

By dark the baggage had come in, the dead either buried or burnt according to their religion, and the wounded attended to and made as comfortable as we could make them under the circumstances.

Oldham and some fifty Levies who had been reconnoitring down the left bank of the river had returned, and by nine we got some dinner.

Just as we were turning in, the picket on the road over the nullah first let drive a volley, and Oldham, who was on duty, took some men and doubled out to see what was the matter. On his return, he reported the picket had heard someone moving in the nullah, and as the sentry's challenge had not been answered, they had let drive at it.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MARCH RESUMED THROUGH KILLA DRASAN

WE were up by daylight the next morning, had breakfast, and were ready to march by 7 A.M. The wounded were sent back under Luard and the escort who had brought out the baggage, and we moved off in the opposite direction. Our order of march was always the same, each company taking it in turn to act as advance or rear guard, and every British officer, with the exception of Colonel Kelly and Borradaile, taking his turn on duty.

When my company of Kashmir troops was on rear or advance guard, I went with it; at other times I went with the Levies or Colonel Kelly, whichever seemed most useful.

Our march for this day led for some miles along

a flat, grassy plain, a continuation of the Nisa Gol Maidan, then up and over a fairly high spur, and gradually down to the river bed opposite the village of Awi or Avi. Here we had a halt for the men to drink, as it was pretty thirsty work marching in these hot valleys. We passed a village or two on the opposite bank, but our side of the river was a desert of rocks and stones. There was a small bridge at Awi, so Cobbe, with fifty men and Shah Mirza as interpreter, was sent across to collect supplies from Buni, the village in which Jones had remained for a week after the Koragh affair. The main body continued along the right bank parallel with Cobbe's party.

During our halt two men had come in, bringing two ponies, which were much appreciated by Colonel Kelly and Borradaile.

When we got opposite Buni, there was a halt at the head of the column, and Colonel Kelly sent me on to find out the reason.

I forgot to mention that when we were encamped at Sanoghar, a man—Chitralli—had come in, having escaped from the enemy. His brothers were followers of Suji-ul-mulk, the little boy whom

Surgeon-Major Robertson, as he then was, had made Mehiter, and who was besieged in Chitral with our troops. The opposition party, represented by Mahomed Issar, Sher Afzul's foster-brother, had therefore, on capturing this man, put him in quod at Killa Drasan. He had managed to escape the day of the fight, and joined us that evening, and we promptly made use of him as a guide.

This guide now informed us that the road ahead was destroyed, and would take two days to repair, but, by turning up a spur on the right, we could get past the broken part of the road.

In consequence of this there was a halt while the Levies ascended the spur and reconnoitred the top, and very soon we saw them signalling back that all was clear. Sending back the news to Colonel Kelly, I remained with the Levies, who now turned sharp to the right and began the ascent. Humayun offered me a pony, which I thankfully accepted, and noticed that there were now two or three ponies where before there had been none. I didn't say anything at the time, but shortly after there appeared an order to say all captured ponies were to be



given up to the Commissariat after the battery had had first pick. It was an awful pull up that spur. I suppose we went up at least two thousand feet. I was all right, as I had a pony, but it must have been agony for the laden coolies. Once up, the going was easy enough; open, grassy downs, gradually sloping down from where we stood to the junction of the Yarkhun and Turikho valleys, though the actual sides of the tableland dropped steeply down to the rivers. By our present divergence we had turned the flank of any position the enemy could take up between Mastuj and Killa Drasan, and had also got the higher ground, our road from here onwards being down hill.

I went ahead now with the Levies, as I wanted to find out if the fort was held at Drasan.

We got to the edge of the downs by 2 P.M., looking straight down on the fort, which was the other side of the river, but from our position we could see right down into the interior.

The place was evidently deserted, for as we were watching, I saw a man go up and try the door, but, finding it closed, he went away again.

The villages all round seemed deserted, and I could only see two men driving some cattle high up in the hills.

Before I had finished my sketch, the advance guard came up, and, shortly after, Colonel Kelly. There was a short halt to let the tail of the column close up, and then we commenced the descent. We were down on the river bank in twenty minutes, and the Levies waded across, I on my pony. We found the remains of a bridge which had evidently only just been destroyed, and the material, I fancy, thrown into the river. The Levies were soon up to the fort, and we had the main gate down in a jiffy by using a tree as a battering-ram, and then the Levies went through the place like professional burglars. Before I had hardly got into the courtyard, they had found the grain store, and were looting it. I put Gammer Sing on sentry duty over the entrance, and, Borradaile coming up, we inspected it, and found enough grain to last us some months. We now set the Levies to work to get beams for repairing the bridge; at first we could not find any long enough, until the Levies noticed the roof poles of the verandah. We had

them out and ran them down to the river bank, opposite to where the Pioneers had drawn up on the farther bank.

It took some time to build the bridge, and it was pretty rickety when done, but it saved the men having to ford. Only one man fell into the river, but he was pulled out all right. The baggage did not arrive at the bridge till dark, and most of the coolies waded across, as there was not time for them to cross in single file on the bridge. The battery also forded, but the donkeys had to be unladen and the loads carried across by hand, and the donkeys were then driven in and made to swim. It was night before the rearguard began to cross, Cobbe, who was in command, not getting in till close on nine o'clock. A couple of shots were fired after dark, and there seemed no satisfactory explanation as to why they were fired, but nobody was hit. The coolies were all put into the courtyard of the fort and a guard on the gate, and they soon had fires going, round which they huddled.

As it was impossible to carry away all the grain we had found, I got permission to issue

a ration to all the coolies, who had most of them no supplies of any description, and, telling the guard who had replaced Ganner Sing to let the coolies in in single file, I then sent some Levies to drive them up like sheep. The news soon spread that food was going cheap, and they didn't require much driving. The flour was in a bin about six feet square, by four feet high, and only a small round hole at the top. We soon enlarged that so that a man could get in. I furnished him with a wooden shovel evidently meant for the job, and gave the order for the men to file in. As each man came in he received a shovelful, into his skirt tail, and then had to march round a box and out of the door. It took some two hours to finish the job, and even then the flour was not expended, while the grain, of which there was some in more bins, had not been touched. I left the guard over the door, and got back in time to get orders out for the next day's march, by which time Cobbe and the rearguard had come in, dinner was ready, and it had begun to rain.

We were camped in front of the fort, the men

in a field, ourselves alongside on a praying place overlooking the river. The Levies were on the right, the ammunition and stores piled by the quarter-guard, the coolies locked up in the fort, and the pickets all right, so we turned in. Towards morning the rain began to fall heavily, so I pulled my bedding under the fort gateway, where I found Stewart and Oldham had already got the best places; however, I found a spot between two levies, and finished the night comfortably enough. We had not done a bad day's work on the whole. Marched from seven in the morning till six at night, covering some twenty miles of hilly country, made a bridge, and occupied one of the chief forts of the country. Cobbe, with the rearguard, had had the poorest time, but he had had the satisfaction of raiding into Buni.

We woke up next morning to find a dull grey sky and the rain pouring down, everything damp and miserable, and the cook having a fight with the wood to make it burn. Our proposed march for the day being only a short one, we did not start till eight A.M. As we were moving off,

a Kashmir sepoy turned up who had been one of Edwardes' party, and whose life had been saved by a friendly villager who gave him some Chitrali clothes. I told him to fall in with the company, and he came down with us to Chitral. The remainder of the flour was distributed among the sepoys, and we took as much grain as we could find carriage for, but it was very little.

A small convoy of Punyal Levies joined us that day ; they had been foraging up the Yarkhun valley, and had been sent after us by Moberly. Our road led along the valley through cornfields and orchards, which, in spite of the rain, looked very pretty and green. The trees were just in their first foliage and the corn about a foot high, while all the peach and apricot trees were covered with bloom. We did not see a soul on our march, but the officer in charge of the rear-guard reported that as soon as we left Killa Drasan, the villagers came hurrying down the hill in crowds.

At one place we had a short halt on account of a battery pony, which was amusing itself by

rolling down a slope with a gun on its back ; it was brought back nothing the worse for its escapade, and we resumed our march.

Before getting into camp, our road led up from the lower valley on to some gentle, undulating spurs of the main range of hills ; here there was a cluster of villages, and every available spot was cultivated.

On one of these spurs we camped, where three small villages or clusters of houses formed a triangle, the centre of which was a cornfield. This formed an excellent halting-place, as the men were billeted in the houses, each giving the other mutual protection. We formed our mess in part of the rooms of the headman's house, one Russool of Khusht ; he was foster-father to the late Nizam-ul-mulk, but had acknowledged the opposition and joined Sher Afzul. (In the photograph he is sitting half hidden behind the Mehter's left arm, with his head rather raised.)

As we had been great friends during my first visit to Chitral,—(he was awfully fond of whisky),—I've no doubt he was pleased to hear I had been his guest in his own house, but I never had an

opportunity to thank him, as he left Chitral hurriedly just before our arrival. The house is the best I have seen in Chitral, a fine stone-paved courtyard, surrounded on three sides with rooms and a verandah, a fine old chinar tree near the gateway on the fourth side. The principal rooms are high and larger than usual, but of the usual pattern. I think we got two companies of the Pioneers and ourselves into this house alone.

By three o'clock we had settled down, and were getting dry. The Levies were sent out foraging, and brought in several ponies. As our stores decreased, and more ponies were brought in, we had spare ponies for riding, and we were nearly all mounted by the time we reached Chitral. However, we had not been there ten days before the owners began turning up, and we were ordered to give them back, much to our disgust. It was quite a treat to be in camp and settled before dark, and I've no doubt the coolies were as thankful as we were. The only drawback to our food was the flour of which the chupatties were made; it was coarse to a degree, and seemed to consist chiefly of



minute speckly pieces of husk, which used to tickle our throats up in the most unpleasant manner, and had a nasty habit of choking the swallower, in addition to being highly indigestible. We used at last to sift the flour through linen, and the residuum was a surprise and revelation.

We had intended to march the next morning by 7 A.M., with the intention of getting to a village called Parpish, but as it was still pelting with rain, the march was deferred, to give the weather a chance of clearing up, which it very kindly did about 10 A.M., when we started. The Kashmir Company was on advance guard that day, so I went with them, two levies leading, as usual, about a quarter of a mile ahead. We struck up country for about two miles, till we got to a kotal, or saddle, from whence we had a splendid view of the surrounding country. During a halt, Colonel Kelly came up, and I was able to point out to him the different places—Koragh Defile, where Ross's party had been cut up, Reshun, where Edwardes and Fowler had held out for a week, and Barnas, a village we reached the next day. All these places were on the opposite bank of the river and several

thousand feet below us. We had, by taking our present route, avoided a very difficult and dangerous part of the country, and no doubt much disgusted the inhabitants, who, on the old route, would have had all things their own way.

By two o'clock we had reached the village of Gurka, where we were met by a deputation, from whom we demanded certain supplies to be brought to our camp on pain of severe punishment if not complied with, and by 4 P.M. we got to the hamlet of Lun, and as there was a good camping ground, good water and firewood, Colonel Kelly decided to halt there. Here also supplies were demanded, the amount depending a good deal on the number of houses and the knowledge of the locality possessed by Humayun. The Lunites paid up smartly enough, as we were too close neighbours to allow of any hesitation; but the Gurka contribution had only partly come in the next morning, so that a party of the Levies was sent back, and the Gurka villagers had the trouble of bringing the loads along to Barnas, instead of only two miles into Lun, while the headman was made to carry a box of ammunition all the way to Chitral.

Before evening the sun came out, and it was very jolly in camp. We had some nice short turf to lie on, and the night was not too cold for comfort. There were good places for the pickets, and the camp was compact and handy.

## CHAPTER IX

### NEARING CHITRAL

THE next morning, April 17th, we started sharp at 7 A.M. Two prisoners had been brought in the night before, one of whom had a Snider and twenty rounds of ammunition, the other a matchlock. They confessed that they had fought us at Nisa Gol, and stated they were now going home. We thought differently, and requested them to carry boxes of ammunition; one of them, the owner of the Snider, objected, on the ground that he was a mullah, but the objection was overruled as frivolous, and he accompanied us to Chitral. We always gave the ammunition to doubtful characters, as they were then under the direct supervision of the guard, and the loads were also more awkward and heavier than skins of flour.

We dropped down the hills now to the river bank. I was on rearguard, a nuisance at the best of times, as any check at the head of the column acts on the rearguard in increasing ratio to the length of the column, so a good deal of time is spent in wondering why the dickens they don't get on in front. That was a particularly bad day for halts: the first one was caused by the column having to cross the Perpish Gol, a very similar place to the Nisa Gol, but undefended. About two miles farther on, the road ran across the face of a cliff, and had been destroyed; it took some three hours to repair it, and then the baggage could only get along slowly.

We had some five unladen donkeys that were kept at the end of the baggage column in case of need, and, one of them trying to push past another, they both rolled over the cliff and went down about a hundred feet on to the road below, which here made a zigzag. The first donkey who came down landed on his head and broke his silly neck; but the second donkey had better luck, and landed on the first donkey in a sitting position. He got up, sniffed contemptuously at his late friend, and resumed

his journey. We rolled the remains of the elect over the cliff into the river, and also resumed our course.

During this march and following ones we frequently saw the bodies of men floating down the river or stranded in shoals. They were probably the Sikhs killed with Ross, or perhaps some of Edwardes' party. By 4.30 P.M. the rearguard had crossed the cliff, and, rounding the shoulder of a spur, descended to a plain, bare of vegetation, with the exception of the inevitable wormwood. We crossed this for about a mile, and then struck down to the river, and saw the Pioneers and guns drawn up on the farther bank, and just moving off.

The road on the right hand having been again destroyed a few miles beyond, the direction of the column had been changed, and, a ford having been found, the troops had waded across, with the intention of camping that night at the village of Barnas, the rearguard arriving just in time to see the main body move off towards the village. The Levies had been left behind to help the baggage across, and rendered invaluable assistance, saving many a man from drowning.

I found most of the coolies with their loads still on the right bank of the river, leisurely proceeding to strip before wading across ; the loads had to be carried on their heads, the water being well above their waists. Those loads that could be divided were carried over piecemeal, the coolie returning for the second part after taking the first across. This idea was all very fine in theory, but we found that most of the coolies, having made the first trip, sat down on the bank and proceeded to dress, leaving the remainder of their load to find its way across as best it could. Luckily Sergeant Reeves was on the farther bank, and I having also crossed over, we proceeded to drive every coolie back into the river, until there was not a load left on the opposite bank.

Rudyard Kipling, in his story of the taking of the Lungtungpen, tells how, after the scrimmage in the village, "We halted and formed up, and Liftinant Brazenose blushin' pink in the light of the mornin' sun. 'Twas the most ondacent parade I iver tuk a hand in—four-and-twenty privates an' a officer av the line in review ordher, an' not as much as wud dust a fife between 'em all in the way

of clothin'." As I stood on that bank, with the evening sun lighting up the river, I thought of "Liftinant Brazenose," and also blushed. True, I was clothed myself, but instead of twenty-five, I had two hundred coolies in the same condition as that bashful officer's army.

It took us some three hours before all those loads were over, during which we had some exciting moments. Most of the coolies found the stream too strong to stem alone, and so they crossed in parties of a dozen or more, holding hands; but now and then a man would try by himself, generally with the result that half-way across he would get swept off his feet, and go floating down the stream, vainly endeavouring to regain his footing. Then there would be a rush of two or three of the levies, the man would be swung on to his feet, and his load fished for. One man I thought was bound to be drowned; he had somehow tied his load on to his head, and, being washed off his feet, his head was kept down below the water, while his legs remained waving frantically in the air. The load, being light, floated, and in this manner he was washed down stream, till two levies reached



him, and, swinging him right side up, brought him spluttering ashore.

I often noticed, when sending an old man back for the remainder of his load, that some youngster who had brought his whole load across would volunteer to bring the remainder of the old man's, and, of course, I was only too glad to let him. We found the young men easy to manage, and the old men were let down lightly; it was the middle-aged man, full of strength and his own importance, who sometimes tried to raise objections, but it was getting late, and no time for fooling, so we drove our arguments home with a gun butt, and the man obeyed. The rearguard crossed in the dark, and by nine o'clock I was able to report to Colonel Kelly that everybody had arrived in camp, just as dinner was ready.

I didn't turn in till late that night, as I was on duty, and had to go scrambling round the pickets; even at that late hour I saw many men still cooking, probably preparing food for the next day.

As our supplies were now reduced to less than three days, our march the next morning was ordered for 10 A.M., in order to allow foraging

parties to go out at daybreak to scoop in anything they could find.

In the meantime, I sent some levies forward to the next village to reconnoitre.

The foraging parties did not bring in much, but in our case every little was of importance, and by 10 A.M. we started. Our front in camp had been protected by a deep nullah; it took some time getting across this. By the time we cleared the village, we met our returning scouts, who reported having seen the enemy in the village of Mori, and reported their strength as some one hundred men on foot, and about twenty horsemen. So we all cheered up at the chance of a fight.

The road now dropped down to the river bed, and ran along the foot of some cliffs three or four hundred feet sheer above the roadway; there was about a mile of this, and then two miles of narrow path along the face of steep shale slopes and cliff face high above the river. Any force once caught in this place could be cut off to a man. The path was so narrow that in many places the gun ponies could not have turned round.

Colonel Kelly, however, was not to be caught in

this way, so the advance guard was ordered to go right through this part of the road till they reached the maidan on the farther side, to hold that, and send back word that they had done so, the main body halting in the meantime till a clear road was announced. Half-way through, the advance guard found the road broken, but it was soon mended, and the end of the road under the cliff reached. Here there was a flattish bit of maidan for about fifty yards before the path ascended, and crossed the face of slope and cliff. The officer in command of the advance guard, thinking this was the maidan mentioned in his orders, sent back word that he was through the defile, and the road clear. Accordingly, the main body advanced with a flanking picket on the cliff above. I was with Colonel Kelly at the head of the column, when, turning a corner, we came slap on top of the halted advance guard. There was no time to stop now, and the advance guard was hurried on to allow the main body to, at least, get clear of the cliffs and on the slopes. We got at last on to the slopes, but found the road broken in several places, which delayed the column considerably; luckily, I knew the Levies

were on ahead, but I was glad when we reached the end of the bad track.

When we were once more on the move, I went ahead to join the Levies, and find out about the reported enemy. I found the Levies on the maidan that our advance guard should have occupied in the first place, and with them two men who had come out from the village of Mori, now only some two miles away.

These men reported that Mahomed Issar had left about 7 A.M. for Khogazi, taking all his following with him, and that he would defend a position known as the Goland Gol, just in front of that village.

I now went ahead with the Levies, and we swept through the village till we saw clear open country ahead, and satisfied ourselves that there were none of the enemy left.

I then ordered the Levies to ransack every nook and cranny for supplies, and went myself in search of a camping ground. That was not a very difficult job, and I soon came upon a nice garden and orchard, with big shady mulberry trees, and a stream flowing down the centre. On one side was

the house that Mahomed Issar had occupied, and belonged to one of Sher Afzul's leading men. It was a well-built house, and inside we found some thirty sacks of caraway seeds, the stuff they put in what are called "wholesome cakes for children."

The Pioneer native officers told us that each sack was worth at least one hundred rupees in Peshawur, but we would gladly have exchanged the whole amount for half the amount of flour. One of the sacks was emptied out and the men allowed to help themselves; each man took away a handful or so, as natives are very fond of it for cooking purposes, especially for curry, a little going a long way. The whole camp smelt of caraway seed, and not an unpleasant smell either. The house was pulled down for firewood. Everyone was delighted with the camp, and it was as picturesque as could be desired. The weather was first-class for bivouacking, the trees were in full leaf, and gave a delightful shade, while the ground was covered with a good sound turf.

Foraging parties were sent out immediately, and the villagers who had met us promised to go

and induce their friends to return. In fact, they did collect some ten men, each of whom brought a small sack of flour, and with that and what the foraging parties brought in, we had enough for ourselves and the coolies for three days, by which time we hoped to arrive in Chitral. A good deal of the grain brought in consisted of unhusked rice and millet, what canary birds are fed on in England, —good enough for the coolies, at any rate, most of them having been used to it from childhood. We tried to get the village water-mills going, but all the ironwork had been carried away, and we had no means of quickly refitting them, so the unthreshed rice and millet seed was issued as it was, and the men had to grind it as best they could, with stones. We still had some goats and sheep, and the men used to get a meat ration whenever there was enough to go round.

The rearguard was in by 5 P.M. that day, the first time since we had left Mastuj that it had come in before dark. Things were looking up.

The bridge at Mori had been burned, but we

heard of another some two miles farther down, which, if destroyed, could be more easily mended, and as the reputed position taken up by the enemy could be turned from the right bank of the river, it was determined to repair it.

Consequently, early the next morning, Oldham and his Sappers, with a covering party of one company of Pioneers under Bethune, and the Hunza Levies, started to repair the bridge, and be ready to cross and turn the enemy's flank, should he be found awaiting us.

An hour later the main body started over a road leading along a high cliff. Here and there the enemy had evidently made attempts to destroy the road, but so ineffectually that the advance guard hardly delayed its advance for five minutes to repair it, and by 10 A.M. we had reached the broken bridge, and found Oldham and his party hard at work mending it.

The great difficulty was want of beams to stretch across from pier to pier, but attempts were being made to get these from an adjacent village on the opposite bank of the river.

The bridge would not be ready for some two

hours at earliest, so Colonel Kelly sent me on to reconnoitre the Goland Gol, which we expected the enemy to hold. I kicked my pony into a gallop and hurried forward.

About a quarter of a mile farther on, I saw one of the road-bearing beams of the destroyed bridge which had stranded on the opposite bank, and sent back a note describing where it could be found.

Another quarter of a mile brought me up to the Punyal Levies, who were already reconnoitring the spurs where the army were supposed to be; but after a careful look through my glasses, we came to the conclusion that there was no enemy, and again advanced. We reached the Goland Gol, which is a narrow nullah running up into the hills on the left bank of the river, the sides being impracticable for several miles, and down the centre of which rushes a mountain torrent, the road to Chitral crossing this latter, just before it flows into the Yarkhun river, by means of a bridge. This bridge we found destroyed, but I sent half the Levies across by fording the stream a hundred yards higher up, and made them occupy the ridge on the



far side, and put the remainder on to repair the bridge. I also gave my pony and a note to one of the levies, whom I sent back with a report to Colonel Kelly, who, on receiving it, had work on the other bridge knocked off, as it was no longer wanted.

We hunted for the beams of the Goland Gol bridge, which we found jammed in the stream a short way down, only one out of the four being smashed, and soon had them back in their places. Then we laid a roadway of boards from a hut near, and filled up the holes with branches, and had the bridge ready before the advance guard arrived. I sent back word, and then crossed the stream and joined the remainder of the Levies on the farther side. Here I found several sangars which covered the approaches to the bridge, and soon had them down, and then went on to the village of Khogazi, which was about a mile ahead.

We swept through that village in the usual manner from end to end, finding only one man who turned out to be a Gilgiti; he had been carried into slavery several years previously, but had married

and settled down. From him we learned that Mohamed Issar, with a following of about one hundred men, had arrived the day before about noon; shortly after, a messenger came in from Sher Afzul, telling him to come into Chitral without delay, and consequently the whole party had set off about 4 P.M. All the villagers, he said, had fled up the Goland Gol to the higher hills, but he would try and bring in any he could find. He did not think the enemy would try and fight again, though there was a place called Baitali, just before the opening into the Chitral valley, where, if any opposition was offered, it would be made. The position could be turned from both flanks, and ponies could go, but it was not a good road. He professed himself as willing to go and find out if the Baitali Pari was occupied, so I sent him off. I knew the place as one of the worst bits in the whole road between Mastuj and Chitral, but I also knew it could be passed by crossing the river at Khogazi and climbing the hills on the right hand, and down on to the Chitral river above its junction with the Yarkhun river. This would be convenient if the Chitral bridge was destroyed, as

it would take us along the right bank, on which stands the fort; but I knew also of a ford about two miles above the Chitral bridge, where we could cover our passage, as the ground was level and open

## CHAPTER X

### WE REACH THE GOAL

I PICKED out a camping ground even better than we had enjoyed at Mori, and then shared some chupatties and chocolate with Rajah Akbar Khan.

The main body came in by two o'clock, and the baggage shortly after. Foraging parties were sent out, and Oldham sent to report on the bridge in case we decided to cross. He reported it as practicable, so a guard was put on it to keep it so.

Stewart came into camp that day like a bear with a sore head. "Here had he been hauling his guns over condemned precipices in pursuit of an invisible enemy. Call this war! it was only a route march. For a promenade he preferred the Empire Theatre."

We tried to console him with hopes of a fight before Chitral, but he declared the Chitralis had grievously disappointed him, and went off to see about fodder for his ponies. Alas, poor Stewart! he didn't get his desire.

As soon as we had settled down in camp, Colonel Kelly told me to try and find some man who would carry a letter into Chitral, to warn the garrison of our approach. I got hold of Shah Mirza, and asked him if he knew anyone who would go. First, we tried the man who had escaped from Killa Drasan, but he refused; then Shah Mirza volunteered to go himself, but he was too useful to be spared. Just as we were wondering who we could get to go, Humayun and Akbar Khan turned up, evidently excited, and escorting a man who was bearing letters from Chitral. He handed over a letter addressed to "The officer commanding troops advancing from Gilgit." Inside was a letter from Surgeon-Major Robertson, saying that Sher Afzul had fled on the night of the 18th April, and the siege of Chitral was raised. He enclosed a return of the killed and wounded, which, he requested, might be forwarded to India. Then

we went through the list, and came across poor Baird's name among the killed. This was the first we had heard of it, the natives all declaring that it was Gurdon who had been killed. Among the wounded we came across Surgeon-Major Robertson severely and Captain Campbell severely. Poor old General Baj Singh and Major Bicham Singh were killed, and all together the casualties amounted to one hundred and four killed and wounded out of three hundred and seventy combatants. So the garrison had evidently had a lively time of it. Then we set to work and pumped the messenger dry of all the news he could tell, the details of which are now too well known for me to relate. The man had a passport from Surgeon-Major Robertson, sending him to Killa Drasan, so he was allowed to go. We also found out from him that there was no enemy between us and Chitral, at which Stewart swore openly. My spy returned on meeting the Chitral messenger.

There was no difficulty now in getting a man to go to Chitral, so we sent off one with a note, saying we should arrive next day by noon, the 20th April.

The news had spread quickly through camp, and the native officers came round to hear about it. We sent back a post to Mastuj by some Nagar Levies who had just brought in a post, and then had a good discussion as to the causes that led to the raising of the siege.

I don't know if any of the other officers felt it, but I know, speaking for myself, that with the departure of any uncertainty about our arrival in Chitral in time to save the garrison, a good deal of interest also departed.

I felt inclined to agree with Stewart, that the enemy had given us a just cause for complaint by not playing the game. At any rate, they might have given us a run for our money in front of Chitral, and this seemed to be the general idea throughout the column, consequently our opinion of the Chitrali pluck sank considerably.

We marched at 6 A.M. the next morning punctually, and by noon the advance guard was in the Chitral valley. A halt was ordered to allow the main body to form up, as the guns had had a bad time getting through the Baitali Pari, and had to be unloaded and carried by hand for some distance.

After about two miles we came in sight of the Chitral bridge, which had not been destroyed, and, soon after, of the fort, with the Union Jack still floating on one of the towers.

We crossed the bridge, closed up the column on the other side, the buglers were sent to the front, and we marched on to the fort with as much swagger as we could put on.

We found the garrison in front of the main gate, and were very glad to shake hands again with all our old friends and congratulate them on their splendid defence.

We had a short halt, and then moved on, and took up a position covering the fort, with our front on a nullah and pickets facing south. Our bivouac was in a nice shady garden, with plenty of good water and wood.

When the men had settled down in camp, the officers went back to the fort, where the garrison gave us breakfast, or rather lunch. There was a great deal to hear and tell, and for the first time we began to realise what a touch-and-go time the garrison had been having. There was only one pause in the conversation, and good old Stewart



chipped in with "D'ye think, now, there's any chance of another fight."

After tiffin, we went round and saw all the sights of interest, and generally interviewed the lions. We saw Harley's mine, the gun tower, the enemy's sangars, the hospital, and we did not forget poor Baird's grave, which was just outside the main gate. Then we went back to camp, and most of us took the opportunity to write home. I also took a photograph when everyone was assembled over the homely cup of tea. The bottles on the table look like whisky, but they only contain treacle made by melting down country goor, the extract of sugar-cane. It was our substitute for butter or jam, luxuries we had not seen for weeks. Whisky was a dream of the past, and rum a scarcity. In fact, there was no difference between what we and the sepoy's ate, except in the manner of cooking.

We went to sleep that night with the blissful consciousness that the next day was a halt at any rate, and I think we needed the rest. We had put on our least ragged coats to march in and make as brave a show as possible, but our kit generally was

in a pretty disreputable state, and there was a good deal of work wanted in the laundry line. Most of us, also, had misgivings about our boots. I was reduced to choosing between boots with large holes in the soles or chuplies mended with string; the boots I kept for show days, as the holes didn't show, and the chuplies for ordinary work. Most of the other officers were much in the same plight.

So ended the march of Colonel Kelly's column to Chitral. Our record, on the whole, was not bad, though, of course, judging by actual distance, we had not done much; it was more the difficult nature of the ground and the altitude at which some of it was done that lent interest to the march, and I am unfeignedly glad my luck caused me to participate in it.

The next day the Kashmir troops of the garrison came out and camped with us, and revelled in the fresh air after the poisonous atmosphere of the fort. Poor chaps! they were walking skeletons, bloodless, and as quiet as the ghosts they resembled, most of them reduced to jerseys and garments of any description, but still plucky and of good heart. They cheered up wonderfully in a few days with

good fresh air and sleep, and marched from Chitral quite briskly when they left.

The next day I again went round the fort and got some photos, which follow. One of the British officers of the garrison beneath the gun tower, which was set on fire, and during the extinguishing of which Surgeon-Major Robertson, the British agent, was wounded by a Snider bullet. There is also the loophole, afterwards made, from which a sentry inside the tower could fire at anyone within a few feet. Then I got Harley to show me the site of his sortie, and pretty grisly the place looked, but unfortunately the photograph I took, showing the mine lying open like a ditch to the foot of the tower, was a "wrong un." But I succeeded in getting one showing the mouth of the mine, with the excavated earth.

Then I took out of the sangars from the interior, with the little shelters used by the Pathans when not amusing themselves with rifle practice. The water tower is just visible through the foliage.

Then I took a photo of the fort from the corner by the gun tower looking towards the musjid, which is shown in a photo at the beginning of the book,

but taken in more peaceful times. It shows the bridge in the distance, which the fire of the Sikhs made too hot for the Chitralis, who had to cross over the hills in the daytime.

Then I took Harley and the two native officers of the 14th Sikhs, Subadar Gurmuskh Singh and Jemadar Atta Singh. Atta Singh put on white gloves to grace the occasion, but evidently trembled violently during the exposure.

I got a shot at Borradaile sitting in a shelter Oldham had run up for himself; the hawk and spear were looted at Sanoghar, I think. Borradaile looks very like Diogenes in his tub. I also took some Kafirs who strolled into camp. We used to buy their daggers, but they got to asking as much as twenty rupees for a good one after a time. Every Kaffir has a dagger, some of them very good ones, but roughly finished.

After we had been some days in Chitral, some of the 3rd Brigade under General Gatacre arrived, followed by General Low and the headquarter staff.

There was a parade of all the troops in Chitral, with the usual tomasha of salutes and inspection.

distribution of happiness and misery is ever in this life to be expected. Not only the goods of fortune, and the endowments of the body (both of which are important), not only these advantages, I say, are unequally divided between the virtuous and vicious, but even the mind itself partakes, in some degree, of this disorder; and the most worthy character, by the very constitution of the passions, enjoys not always the highest felicity.

= It is observable, that though every bodily pain proceeds from some disorder in the part or organ, yet the pain is not always proportioned to the disorder, but is greater or less, according to the greater or less sensibility of the part upon which the noxious humours exert their influence. A *toothache* produces more violent convulsions of pain than a *phthisis* or a *dropsy*. In like manner, with regard to the economy of the mind, we may observe, that all vice is indeed pernicious; yet the disturbance or pain is not measured out by nature with exact proportion to the degrees of vice; nor is the man of highest virtue, even abstracting from external accidents, always the most happy. A gloomy and melancholy disposition is certainly, *to our sentiments*, a vice or imperfection; but as it may be accompanied with great sense of honour and great integrity, it may

the man, and he seeks in vain for that persuasion which before seemed so firm and unshaken. What remedy for this inconvenience? Assist yourself by a frequent perusal of the entertaining moralists: have recourse to the learning of Plutarch, the imagination of Lucian, the eloquence of Cicero, the wit of Seneca, the gaiety of Montaigne, the sublimity of Shaftesbury. Moral precepts, so couched, strike deep, and fortify the mind against the illusions of passion. But trust not altogether to external aid: by habit and study acquire that philosophical temper which both gives force to reflection, and by rendering a great part of your happiness independent, takes off the edge from all disorderly passions, and tranquillizes the mind. Despise not these helps; but confide not too much in them neither; unless nature has been favourable in the temper with which she has endowed you.

be found in very worthy characters, though it is sufficient alone to embitter life, and render the person affected with it completely miserable. On the other hand, a selfish villain may possess a spring and alacrity of temper, a certain *gaiety of heart*, which is indeed a good quality, but which is rewarded much beyond its merit, and when attended with good fortune, will compensate for the uneasiness and remorse arising from all the other vices.

I shall add, as an observation to the same purpose, that, if a man be liable to a vice or imperfection, it may often happen, that a good quality, which he possesses along with it, will render him more miserable, than if he were completely vicious. A person of such imbecility of temper, as to be easily broken by affliction, is more unhappy for being endowed with a generous and friendly disposition, which gives him a lively concern for others, and exposes him the more to fortune and accidents. A sense of shame, in an imperfect character, is certainly a virtue, but produces great uneasiness and remorse, from which the abandoned villain is entirely free. A very amorous complexion, with a heart incapable of friendship, is happier than the same excess in love, with a generosity of temper, which transports a man beyond himself, and renders him a total slave to the object of his passion.

In a word, human life is more governed by fortune than by reason, is to be regarded more as a dull pastime than a serious occupation, and is more influenced by particular humour, than by general principles. Shall we engage ourselves in it with passion and anxiety? It is not worthy of so much concern. Shall we be indifferent about what happens? We lose all the pleasure of the game by our phlegm and carelessness. While we are reasoning concerning life, life is gone, and death, though perhaps they receive him differently, yet treats alike the fool and the philosopher. To reduce life to

exact rule and method is commonly a painful, oft a fruitless occupation : and is it not also a proof, that we overvalue the prize for which we contend ? Even to reason so carefully concerning it, and to fix with accuracy its just idea, would be overvaluing it, were it not that, to some tempers, this occupation is one of the most amusing in which life could possibly be employed.

## ESSAY XIX

### OF POLYGAMY AND DIVORCES

As marriage is an engagement entered into by mutual consent, and has for its end the propagation of the species, it is evident that it must be susceptible of all the variety of conditions which consent establishes, provided they be not contrary to this end.

A man, in conjoining himself to a woman, is bound to her according to the terms of his engagement. In begetting children, he is bound, by all the ties of nature and humanity, to provide for their subsistence and education. When he has performed these two parts of duty, no one can reproach him with injustice or injury. And as the terms of his engagement, as well as the methods of subsisting his offspring, may be various, it is mere superstition to imagine, that marriage can be entirely uniform, and will admit only of one mode or form. Did not human laws restrain the natural liberty of men, every particular marriage would be as different as contracts or bargains of any other kind or species.

As circumstances vary, and the laws propose different advantages, we find, that, in different times and places, they impose different conditions on this important contract. In Tonquin, it is usual for the sailors, when the ship comes into harbour, to marry for the season, and, notwithstanding this precarious engagement, they are assured, it is said, of the strictest fidelity to their bed, as well as in



the whole management of their affairs, from those temporary spouses.

I cannot, at present, recollect my authorities; but I have somewhere read, that the republic of Athens, having lost many of its citizens by war and pestilence, allowed every man to marry two wives, in order the sooner to repair the waste which had been made by these calamities. The poet Euripides happened to be coupled to two noisy vixens, who so plagued him with their jealousies and quarrels, that he became ever after a professed *woman-hater*; and is the only theatrical writer, perhaps the only poet, that ever entertained an aversion to the sex.

In that agreeable romance called the *History of the Sevarambians*, where a great many men and a few women are supposed to be shipwrecked on a desert coast, the captain of the troop, in order to obviate those endless quarrels which arose, regulates their marriages after the following manner: He takes a handsome female to himself alone; assigns one to every couple of inferior officers, and to five of the lowest rank he gives one wife in common.

The ancient Britons had a singular kind of marriage, to be met with among no other people. Any number of them, as ten or a dozen, joined in a society together, which was perhaps requisite for mutual defence in those barbarous times. In order to link this society the closer, they took an equal number of wives in common; and whatever children were born, were reputed to belong to all of them, and were accordingly provided for by the whole community.

Among the inferior creatures, nature herself, being the supreme legislator, prescribes all the laws which regulate their marriages, and varies those laws according to the different circumstances of the creature. Where she furnishes with ease, food and defence to the new-born animal, the present

embrace terminates the marriage; and the care of the offspring is committed entirely to the female. Where the food is of more difficult purchase, the marriage continues for one season, till the common progeny can provide for itself; and then the union immediately dissolves, and leaves each of the parties free to enter into a new engagement at the ensuing season. But nature, having endowed man with reason, has not so exactly regulated every article of his marriage contract, but has left him to adjust them, by his own prudence, according to his particular circumstances and situation. Municipal laws are a supply to the wisdom of each individual; and, at the same time, by restraining the natural liberty of men, make private interest submit to the interest of the public. All regulations, therefore, on this head, are equally lawful and equally conformable to the principles of nature; though they are not all equally convenient, or equally useful to society. The laws may allow of polygamy, as among the Eastern nations; or of voluntary divorces, as among the Greeks and Romans; or they may confine one man to one woman during the whole course of their lives, as among the modern Europeans. It may not be disagreeable to consider the advantages and disadvantages which result from each of these institutions.

The advocates for polygamy may recommend it as the only effectual remedy for the disorders of love, and the only expedient for freeing men from that slavery to the females, which the natural violence of our passions has imposed upon us. By this means alone can we regain our right of sovereignty; and, satiating our appetite, re-establish the authority of reason in our minds, and, of consequence, our own authority in our families. Man, like a weak sovereign, being unable to support himself against the wiles and intrigues of his subjects, must play one faction against another, and

become absolute by the mutual jealousy of the females. *To divide and to govern*, is an universal maxim; and, by neglecting it, the Europeans undergo a more grievous and a more ignominious slavery than the Turks or Persians, who are subjected indeed to a sovereign that lies at a distance from them, but in their domestic affairs rule with uncontrollable sway.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, it may be urged with better reason, that this sovereignty of the male is a real usurpation, and destroys that nearness of rank, not to say equality, which nature has established between the sexes. We are, by nature, their lovers, their friends, their patrons: would we willingly exchange such endearing appellations for the barbarous title of master and tyrant?

In what capacity shall we gain by this inhuman proceeding? As lovers, or as husbands? The *lover* is totally annihilated; and courtship, the most agreeable scene in life, can no longer have place where women have not the free disposal of themselves, but are bought and sold, like the meanest animal. The *husband* is as little a gainer, having found the admirable secret of extinguishing every part of love, except its jealousy. No rose without its thorn; but he must be a foolish wretch indeed, that throws away the rose and preserves only the thorn.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An honest Turk who should come from his seraglio, where every one trembles before him, would be surprised to see *Sylvia* in her drawing-room, adored by all the beaux and pretty fellows about town; and he would certainly take her for some mighty despotic queen, surrounded by her guard of obsequious slaves and eunuchs.

<sup>2</sup> I would not willingly insist upon it as an advantage in our European customs, what was observed by *Mahomet Effendi*, the last Turkish Ambassador in France. *We Turks*, says he, *are great simpletons in comparison of the Christians; we are at the expense and trouble of keeping a seraglio, each in his own house; but you ease yourselves of this burden, and have*

But the Asiatic manners are as destructive to friendship as to love. Jealousy excludes men from all intimacies and familiarities with each other. No one dares bring his friend to his house or table, lest he bring a lover to his numerous wives. Hence, all over the East, each family is as much separate from another, as if they were so many distinct kingdoms. No wonder then that Solomon, living like an Eastern prince, with his seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, without one friend, could write so pathetically concerning the vanity of the world. Had he tried the secret of one wife or mistress, a few friends, and a great many companions, he might have found life somewhat more agreeable. Destroy love and friendship, what remains in the world worth accepting?

The bad education of children, especially children of condition, is another unavoidable consequence of the Eastern institutions. Those who pass the early part of life among slaves, are only qualified to be, themselves, slaves and tyrants, and in every future intercourse, either with their inferiors or superiors, are apt to forget the natural equality of mankind. What attention, too, can it be supposed a parent, whose seraglio affords him fifty sons, will give to instilling principles of morality or science into a progeny, with whom he himself is scarcely acquainted, and whom he loves with so divided an affection? Barbarism therefore appears, from reason as well as experience, to be the inseparable attendant of polygamy.

To render polygamy more odious, I need not recount the frightful effects of jealousy, and the constraint in which it holds the fair sex all over the

*your seraglio in your friends' houses.* The known virtue of our *British* ladies free them sufficiently from this imputation, and the *Turk* himself, however great a *Turk* must own, that our free commerce with the fair sex, more than any other invention, embellishes, cultivates, and polishes society.

East. In those countries, men are not allowed to have any commerce with the females, not even physicians, when sickness may be supposed to have extinguished all wanton passions in the bosoms of the fair, and, at the same time, has rendered them unfit objects of desire. Tournefort tells us, that when he was brought into the *Grand Seignior's* seraglio as a physician, he was not a little surprised, in looking along a gallery, to see a great number of naked arms standing out from the sides of the room. He could not imagine what this could mean, till he was told that those arms belonged to bodies which he must cure, without knowing any more about them than what he could learn from the arms. He was not allowed to ask a question of the patient, or even of her attendants, lest he might find it necessary to inquire concerning circumstances which the delicacy of the seraglio allows not to be revealed. Hence physicians in the East pretend to know all diseases from the pulse, as our quacks in Europe undertake to cure a person merely from seeing his water. I suppose, had Monsieur Tournefort been of this latter kind, he would not, in Constantinople, have been allowed by the jealous Turks to be furnished with materials requisite for exercising his art.

In another country, where polygamy is also allowed, they render their wives cripples, and make their feet of no use to them, in order to confine them to their own houses. But it will perhaps appear strange, that, in a European country, jealousy can yet be carried to such a height, that it is indecent so much as to suppose that a woman of rank can have feet or legs. Witness the following story, which we have from very good authority.<sup>1</sup> When the mother of the late king of Spain was on her road towards Madrid, she passed through a little town in Spain famous for its manufactory of gloves and stockings. The magistrates of the place thought

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne, par Madame d'Aunoy.*

they could not better express their joy for the reception of their new queen, than by presenting her with a sample of those commodities for which alone their town was remarkable. The *major domo*, who conducted the princess, received the gloves very graciously, but, when the stockings were presented, he flung them away with great indignation, and severely reprimanded the magistrates for this egregious piece of indecency. *Know*, says he, *that a queen of Spain has no legs*. The young queen, who at that time understood the language but imperfectly, and had often been frightened with stories of Spanish jealousy, imagined that they were to cut off her legs. Upon which she fell a crying, and begged them to conduct her back to Germany, for that she never could endure the operation, and it was with some difficulty they could appease her. Philip IV. is said never in his life to have laughed heartily but at the recital of this story.<sup>1</sup>

Having rejected polygamy, and matched one man with one woman, let us now consider what duration we shall assign to their union, and whether we shall admit of those voluntary divorces which were customary among the Greeks and Romans. Those who

<sup>1</sup> If a *Spanish* lady must not be supposed to have legs, what must be supposed of a *Turkish* lady? She must not be supposed to have a being at all. Accordingly, it is esteemed a piece of rudeness and indecency at *Constantinople* ever to make mention of a man's wives before him.<sup>1</sup> In *Europe* it is true, fine bred people make it also a rule never to talk of their wives: but the reason is not founded on our jealousy. I suppose it is, because we should be apt, were it not for this rule, to become troublesome to company, by talking too much of them.

The President *Montesquieu* has given a different reason for this polite maxim. *Men*, says he, *never care to mention their wives in company lest they should talk of them before people that know them better than they do themselves*.

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<sup>1</sup> *Memoires de Marquis d'Argens*



inconveniences are sufficiently felt, where nature has made the divorce by the doom inevitable to all mortals: and shall we seek to multiply those inconveniences by multiplying divorces, and putting it in the power of parents, upon every caprice, to render their posterity miserable?

*Secondly*, If it be true, on the one hand, that the heart of man naturally delights in liberty, and hates every thing to which it is confined; it is also true, on the other, that the heart of man naturally submits to necessity, and soon loses an inclination, when there appears an absolute impossibility of gratifying it. These principles of human nature, you will say, are contradictory: but what is man but a heap of contradictions! Though it is remarkable, that where principles are, after this manner, contrary in their operation, they do not always destroy each other; but the one or the other may predominate on any particular occasion, according as circumstances are more or less favourable to it. For instance, love is a restless and impatient passion, full of caprices and variations: arising in a moment from a feature, from an air, from nothing, and suddenly extinguishing after the same manner. Such a passion requires liberty above all things; and therefore Eloisa had reason, when, in order to preserve this passion, she refused to marry her beloved Abelard.

How oft, when pressed to marriage, have I said,  
Curse on all laws but those which love has made:  
Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,  
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.

But *friendship* is a calm and sedate affection, conducted by reason and cemented by habit; springing from long acquaintance and mutual obligations; without jealousies or fears, and without those feverish fits of heat and cold, which cause such an agreeable torment in the amorous passion. So sober an affection, therefore, as friendship, rather thrives under



constraint, and never rises to such a height, as when any strong interest or necessity binds two persons together, and gives them some common object of pursuit.<sup>1</sup> We need not, therefore, be afraid of drawing the marriage knot, which chiefly subsists by friendship, the closest possible. The amity between the persons, where it is solid and sincere, will rather gain by it: and where it is wavering and uncertain, that is the best expedient for fixing it. How many frivolous quarrels and disgusts are there, which people of common prudence endeavour to forget, when they lie under a necessity of passing their lives together; but which would soon be inflamed into the most deadly hatred, were they pursued to the utmost, under the prospect of an easy separation?

In the *third* place, We must consider, that nothing is more dangerous than to unite two persons so closely in all their interests and concerns, as man and wife, without rendering the union entire and total. The least possibility of a separate interest must be the source of endless quarrels and suspicions. The wife, not secure of her establishment, will still be driving some separate end or project; and the husband's selfishness, being accompanied with more power, may be still more dangerous.

Should these reasons against voluntary divorces be deemed insufficient, I hope nobody will pretend to refuse the testimony of experience. At the

<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> Let us consider, then, whether love or friendship should most predominate in marriage, and we shall soon determine whether liberty or constraint be most favourable to it. The happiest marriages, to be sure, are found where love, by long acquaintance, is consolidated into friendship. Whoever dreams of ecstasies beyond the honey-moon, is a fool. Even romances themselves, with all their liberty of fiction, are obliged to drop their lovers the very day of their marriage, and find it easier to support the passion for a dozen of years under coldness, disdain, and difficulties, than a week under possession and security.

time when divorces were most frequent among the Romans, marriages were most rare; and Augustus was obliged, by penal laws, to force men of fashion into the married state; a circumstance which is scarcely to be found in any other age or nation. The more ancient laws of Rome, which prohibited divorces, are extremely praised by Dionysius Halicarnassus. Wonderful was the harmony, says the historian, which this inseparable union of interests produced between married persons; while each of them considered the inevitable necessity by which they were linked together, and abandoned all prospect of any choice or establishment.

The exclusion of polygamy and divorces sufficiently recommends our present European practice with regard to marriage.

## ESSAY XX

### OF SIMPLICITY AND REFINEMENT IN WRITING

FINE writing, according to Mr. Addison, consists of sentiments which are natural, without being obvious. There cannot be a juster and more concise definition of fine writing.

Sentiments, which are merely natural, affect not the mind with any pleasure, and seem not worthy of our attention. The pleasantries of a waterman, the observations of a peasant, the ribaldry of a porter or hackney coachman, all of these are natural and disagreeable. What an insipid comedy should we make of the chit-chat of the tea-table, copied faithfully and at full length? Nothing can please persons of taste, but nature drawn with all her graces and ornaments, *la belle nature*; or if we copy low life, the strokes must be strong and remarkable, and must convey a lively image to the mind. The absurd *naïveté* of *Sancho Panza* is represented in such inimitable colours by Cervantes, that it entertains as much as the picture of the most magnanimous hero or the softest lover.

The case is the same with orators, philosophers, critics, or any author who speaks in his own person, without introducing other speakers or actors. If his language be not elegant, his observations uncommon, his sense strong and masculine, he will in vain boast his nature and simplicity. He may be correct; but he never will be agreeable. — It is the

unhappiness of such authors, that they are never blamed or censured. The good fortune of a book, and that of a man, are not the same. The secret, deceiving path of life, which Horace talks of, *fallentis semita vitæ*, may be the happiest lot of the one, but it is the greatest misfortune which the other can possibly fall into.

On the other hand, productions which are merely surprising, without being natural, can never give any lasting entertainment to the mind. To draw chimeras, is not, properly speaking, to copy or imitate. The justness of the representation is lost, and the mind is displeased to find a picture which bears no resemblance to any original. Nor are such excessive refinements more agreeable in the epistolary or philosophic style, than in the epic or tragic. Too much ornament is a fault in every kind of production. Uncommon expressions, strong flashes of wit, pointed similes, and epigrammatic turns, especially when they recur too frequently, are a disfigurement, rather than any embellishment of discourse. As the eye, in surveying a Gothic building, is distracted by the multiplicity of ornaments, and loses the whole by its minute attention to the parts, so the mind, in perusing a work overstocked with wit, is fatigued and disgusted with the constant endeavour to amuse and surprise. This is the case where a writer overabounds in wit, even though that wit, in itself, should be just and agreeable. But it commonly happens to such writers, that they seek for their favourite ornaments, even where the subject does not afford them, and by that means have twenty insipid conceits for one thought which is really beautiful.

There is no object in critical learning more copious than this, of the just mixture of simplicity and refinement in writing, and therefore, not to wander in too large a field, I shall confine myself to a few general observations on that head.

*First*, I observe, *That though excesses of both kinds are to be avoided, and though a proper medium ought to be studied in all productions, yet this medium lies not in a point, but admits of a considerable latitude.* Consider the wide distance, in this respect, between Mr. Pope and Lucretius. These seem to lie in the two greatest extremes of refinement and simplicity in which a poet can indulge himself, without being guilty of any blamable excess. All this interval may be filled with poets who may differ from each other, but may be equally admirable, each in his peculiar style and manner. Corneille and Congreve, who carry their wit and refinement somewhat further than Mr. Pope, (if poets of so different a kind can be compared together,) and Sophocles and Terence, who are more simple than Lucretius, seem to have gone out of that medium in which the most perfect productions are found, and to be guilty of some excess in these opposite characters. Of all the great poets, Virgil and Racine, in my opinion, lie nearest the centre, and are the furthest removed from both the extremities.

My *second* observation on this head is, *That it is very difficult, if not impossible, to explain by words where the just medium lies between the excesses of simplicity and refinement, or to give any rule by which we can know precisely the bounds between the fault and the beauty.* A critic may discourse not only very judiciously on this head without instructing his readers, but even without understanding the matter perfectly himself. There is not a finer piece of criticism than the *Dissertation on Pastorals* by Fontenelle, in which, by a number of reflections and philosophical reasonings, he endeavours to fix the just medium which is suitable to that species of writing. But let any one read the pastorals of that author, and he will be convinced that this judicious critic, notwithstanding his fine reasonings, had a false taste, and fixed the point of perfection much

nearer the extreme of refinement than pastoral poetry will admit of. The sentiments of his shepherds are better suited to the toilettes of Paris than to the forests of Arcadia. But this it is impossible to discover from his critical reasonings. He blames all excessive painting and ornament as much as Virgil could have done, had that great poet wrote a dissertation on this species of poetry. However different the tastes of men, their general discourse on these subjects is commonly the same. No criticism can be instructive which descends not to particulars, and is not full of examples and illustrations. It is allowed on all hands, that beauty, as well as virtue, always lies in a medium, but where this medium is placed is a great question, and can never be sufficiently explained by general reasonings.

I shall deliver it as a *third observation* on this subject, *That we ought to be more on our guard against the excess of refinement than that of simplicity; and that because the former excess is both less beautiful, and more dangerous than the latter.*

It is a certain rule, that wit and passion are entirely incompatible. When the affections are moved, there is no place for the imagination. The mind of man being naturally limited, it is impossible that all his faculties can operate at once; and the more any one predominates, the less room is there for the others to exert their vigour. For this reason, a greater degree of simplicity is required in all compositions where men, and actions, and passions are painted, than in such as consist of reflections and observations. And as the former species of writing is the more engaging and beautiful, one may safely, upon this account, give the preference to the extreme of simplicity above that of refinement.

We may also observe, that those compositions which we read the oftenest, and which every man of taste has got by heart, have the recommendation of simplicity, and have nothing surprising in the

thought, when divested of that elegance of expression, and harmony of numbers, with which it is clothed. If the merit of the composition lie in a point of wit, it may strike at first; but the mind anticipates the thought in the second perusal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of Martial, the first line recalls the whole; and I have no pleasure in repeating to myself what I know already. But each line, each word in Catullus has its merit, and I am never tired with the perusal of him. It is sufficient to run over Cowley once; but Parnell, after the fiftieth reading, is as fresh as at the first. Besides it is with books as with woman, where a certain plainness of manner and of dress is more engaging than that glare of paint, and airs, and apparel, which may dazzle the eye, but reaches not the affections. Terence is a modest and bashful beauty, to whom we grant every thing, because he assumes nothing, and whose purity and nature make a durable, though not a violent impression on us.

But refinement, as it is the less *beautiful*, so is it the more *dangerous* extreme, and what we are the aptest to fall into. Simplicity passes for dulness, when it is not accompanied with great elegance and propriety. On the contrary, there is something surprising in a blaze of wit and conceit. Ordinary readers are mightily struck with it, and falsely imagine it to be the most difficult, as well as the most excellent way of writing. Seneca abounds with agreeable faults, says Quintilian, *abundat dulcibus vitiis*; and for that reason is the more dangerous, and the more apt to pervert the taste of the young and inconsiderate.

I shall add, that the excess of refinement is now more to be guarded against than ever; because it is the extreme which men are the most apt to fall into, after learning has made some progress, and after eminent writers have appeared in every species of composition. The endeavour to please by novelty

leads men wide of simplicity and nature, and fills their writings with affectation and conceit. It was thus the Asiatic eloquence degenerated so much from the Attic. It was thus the age of Claudius and Nero became so much inferior to that of Augustus in taste and genius. And perhaps there are, at present, some symptoms of a like degeneracy of taste in France, as well as in England.



## ESSAY XXI

### OF NATIONAL CHARACTERS

THE vulgar are apt to carry all *national characters* to extremes ; and, having once established it as a principle that any people are knavish, or cowardly, or ignorant, they will admit of no exception, but comprehend every individual under the same censure. Men of sense condemn these undistinguishing judgments ; though, at the same time, they allow that each nation has a peculiar set of manners, and that some particular qualities are more frequently to be met with among one people than among their neighbours. The common people in Switzerland have probably more honesty than those of the same rank in Ireland ; and every prudent man will, from that circumstance alone, make a difference in the trust which he reposes in each. We have reason to expect greater wit and gaiety in a Frenchman than in a Spaniard, though Cervantes was born in Spain. An Englishman will naturally be supposed to have more knowledge than a Dane, though Tycho Brahe was a native of Denmark.

Different reasons are assigned for these *national characters* ; while some account for them from *moral*, others from *physical* causes. By *moral* causes, I mean all circumstances which are fitted to work on the mind as motives or reasons, and which render a peculiar set of manners habitual to us. Of this kind are, the nature of the government, the



of the body than that of the mind, they are commonly thoughtless and ignorant.<sup>1</sup>

It is a trite, but not altogether a false maxim, that *priests of all religions are the same*; and though the character of the profession will not, in every instance, prevail over the personal character, yet it is sure always to predominate with the greater number. For as chemists observe, that spirits, when raised to a certain height, are all the same, from whatever materials they be extracted; so these men, being elevated above humanity, acquire a uniform character, which is entirely their own, and which, in my opinion, is, generally speaking, not the most amiable that is to be met with in human society. It is, in most points, opposite to that of a soldier; as is the way of life from which it is derived.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is a saying of Menander, Κομψὸς στρατιώτης, οὐδ' ἂν εἰ πλάττει θεὸς ὁδοῖν γένοιτ' ἔν. Men. apud Stobæum. *It is not in the power even of God to make a polite soldier.* The contrary observation with regard to the manners of soldiers takes place in our days. This seems to me a presumption, that the ancients owed all their refinement and civility to books and study; for which, indeed, a soldier's life is not so well calculated. Company and the world is their sphere. And if there be any politeness to be learned from company, they will certainly have a considerable share of it.

<sup>2</sup> Though all mankind have a strong propensity to religion at certain times and in certain dispositions, yet are there few or none who have it to that degree, and with that constancy, which is requisite to support the character of this profession. It must therefore happen, that clergymen, being drawn from the common mass of mankind, as people are to other employments, by the views of profit, the greater part, though no atheists or free-thinkers, will find it necessary, on particular occasions, to feign more devotion than they are at that time possessed of, and to maintain the appearance of fervour and seriousness, even when jaded with the exercises of their religion, or when they have their minds engaged in the common occupations of life. They must not, like the rest of the world, give scope to their natural movements and sentiments: they must set a guard over their looks, and words, and actions: and in order to support the veneration paid



do I think that men owe any thing of their temper or genius to the air, food, or climate. I confess, that the contrary opinion may justly, at first sight,

head: because all their credit and livelihood depend upon the belief which their opinions meet with; and they alone pretend to a divine and supernatural authority, or have any colour for representing their antagonists as impious and profane. The *Odium Theologicum*, or Theological Hatred, is noted even to a proverb, and means that degree of rancour which is the most furious and implacable.

Revenge is a natural passion to mankind; but seems to reign with the greatest force in priests and women: because, being deprived of the immediate exertion of anger, in violence and combat, they are apt to fancy themselves despised on that account; and their pride supports their vindictive disposition.

Thus many of the vices of human nature are, by fixed moral causes, inflamed in that profession; and though several individuals escape the contagion, yet all wise governments will be on their guard against the attempts of a society, who will for ever combine into one faction; and while it acts as a society, will for ever be actuated by ambition, pride, revenge, and a persecuting spirit.

The temper of religion is grave and serious; and this is the character required of priests, which confines them to strict rules of decency, and commonly prevents irregularity and intemperance amongst them. The gaiety, much less the excesses of pleasure, is not permitted in that body; and this virtue is, perhaps, the only one which they owe to their profession. In religions, indeed, founded on speculative principles, and where public discourses make a part of religious service, it may also be supposed that the clergy will have a considerable share in the learning of the times; though it is certain that their taste in eloquence will always be greater than their proficiency in reasoning and philosophy. But whoever possesses the other noble virtues of humanity, meekness, and moderation, as very many of them no doubt do, is beholden for them to nature or reflection, not to the genius of his calling.

It was no bad expedient in the old Romans, for preventing the strong effect of the priestly character, to make it a law, that no one should be received into the sacerdotal office till he was past fifty years of age.—*Dion. Hal. lib. i.* The living a layman till that age, it is presumed, would be able to fix the character.

seem probable; since we find, that these circumstances have an influence over every other animal, and that even those creatures, which are fitted to live in all climates, such as dogs, horses, etc., do not attain the same perfection in all. The courage of bull-dogs and game-cocks seems peculiar to England. Flanders is remarkable for large and heavy horses. Spain for horses light, and of good mettle. And any breed of these creatures, transplanted from one country to another, will soon lose the qualities which they derived from their native climate. It may be asked, why not the same with men?<sup>1</sup>

There are few questions more curious than this, or which will oftener occur in our inquiries concerning human affairs, and therefore it may be proper to give it a full examination.

The human mind is of a very imitative nature, nor is it possible for any set of men to converse often together, without acquiring a similitude of manner, and communicating to each other their vices as well as virtues. The propensity to company and society is strong in all rational creatures, and

<sup>1</sup> Caesar (*de Bello Gallico* lib. 1,) says, that the Gallic horses were very good, the German very bad. We find in lib. vii. that he was obliged to remount some German cavalry with Gallic horses. At present no part of Europe has so bad horses of all kinds as France; but Germany abounds with excellent war horses. This may beget a little suspicion that even animals depend not on the climate, but on the different breeds and on the skill and care in rearing them. The north of England abounds in the best horses of all kinds which are perhaps in the world. In the neighbouring counties north side of the Tweed no good horses of any kind are to be met with. Strabo, lib. ii. rejects in a great measure, the influence of climates upon man. All is custom and education, says he. It is not from nature that the Athenians are learned, the Lacedæmonians ignorant, and the Thebans too who are still nearer neighbours to the former. Even the difference of animals, he adds, depends not on climate.

the same disposition, which gives us this propensity, makes us enter deeply into each other's sentiments; and causes like passions and inclinations to run, as it were, by contagion, through the whole club or knot of companions. Where a number of men are united into one political body, the occasions of their intercourse must be so frequent for defence, commerce, and government, that, together with the same speech or language, they must acquire a resemblance in their manners, and have a common or national character, as well as a personal one, peculiar to each individual. Now, though nature produces all kinds of temper and understanding in great abundance, it does not follow, that she always produces them in like proportions, and that in every society the ingredients of industry and indolence, valour and cowardice, humanity and brutality, wisdom and folly, will be mixed after the same manner. In the infancy of society, if any of these dispositions be found in greater abundance than the rest, it will naturally prevail in the composition, and give a tincture to the national character. Or, should it be asserted that no species of temper can reasonably be presumed to predominate, even in those contracted societies, and that the same proportions will always be preserved in the mixture; yet surely the persons in credit and authority, being still a more contracted body, cannot always be presumed to be of the same character; and their influence on the manners of the people must, at all times, be very considerable. If, on the first establishment of a republic, a Brutus should be placed in authority, and be transported with such an enthusiasm for liberty and public good, as to overlook all the ties of nature, as well as private interest, such an illustrious example will naturally have an effect on the whole society, and kindle the same passion in every bosom. Whatever it be that forms the manners of one generation, the next must imbibe a deeper tincture

of the same dye; men being more susceptible of all impressions during infancy, and retaining these impressions as long as they remain in the world. I assert, then, that all national characters, where they depend not on fixed *moral* causes, proceed from such accidents as these, and that physical causes have no discernible operation on the human mind. It is a maxim in all philosophy, that causes which do not appear are to be considered as not existing.

If we run over the globe or revolve the annals of history, we shall discover everywhere signs of a sympathy or contagion of manners, none of the influence of air or climate.

*First*, We may observe, that where a very extensive government has been established for many centuries, it spreads a national character over the whole empire, and communicates to every part a similarity of manners. Thus the Chinese have the greatest uniformity of character imaginable, though the air and climate, in different parts of those vast dominions, admit of very considerable variations.

*Secondly*, In small governments which are contiguous, the people have, notwithstanding, a different character, and are often as distinguishable in their manners as the most distant nations. Athens and Thebes were but a short days journey from each other, though the Athenians were as remarkable for ingenuity, politeness, and gaiety, as the Thebans for dulness, rusticity, and a phlegmatic temper. Plutarch, discoursing of the effects of air on the minds of men, observes, that the inhabitants of the Piræus possessed very different tempers from those of the higher town in Athens, which was distant about four miles from the former. But I believe no one attributes the difference of manners, in Wapping and St. James's, to a difference of air or climate.

*Thirdly*, The same national character commonly follows the authority of government to a precise boundary, and upon crossing a river or passing a



mountain, one finds a new set of manners, with a new government. The Languedocians and Gascons are the gayest people in France; but whenever you pass the Pyrenees, you are among Spaniards. Is it conceivable that the qualities of the air should change exactly with the limits of an empire, which depends so much on the accidents of battles, negotiations, and marriages?

*Fourthly*, Where any set of men, scattered over distant nations, maintain a close society or communication together, they acquire a similitude of manners, and have but little in common with the nations amongst whom they live. Thus the Jews in Europe, and the Armenians in the East, have a peculiar character; and the former are as much noted for fraud as the latter for probity.<sup>1</sup> The *Jesuits*, in all *Roman Catholic* countries, are also observed to have a character peculiar to themselves.

*Fifthly*, Where any accident, as a difference in language or religion, keeps two nations, inhabiting the same country, from mixing with each other, they will preserve, during several centuries, a distinct and even opposite set of manners. The integrity, gravity, and bravery of the Turks, form an exact contrast to the deceit, levity, and cowardice of the modern Greeks.

*Sixthly*, The same set of manners will follow a nation, and adhere to them over the whole globe, as well as the same laws and language. The Spanish, English, French, and Dutch colonies, are all distinguishable even between the tropics.

<sup>1</sup> A small sect or society amidst a greater, are commonly most regular in their morals; because they are more remarked, and the faults of individuals draw dishonour on the whole. The only exception to this rule is, when the superstition and prejudices of the large society are so strong as to throw an infamy on the smaller society, independent of their morals. For in that case, having no character either to save or gain, they become careless of their behaviour, except among themselves.

*Secondly,* The manners of a people change very considerably from one age to another, either by great alterations in their government, by the mixtures of new people, or by that inconsistency to which all human affairs are subject. The industry, industry, and activity of the ancient Greeks, have nothing in common with the stupidity and indolence of the present inhabitants of those regions. Candour, bravery, and love of liberty, formed the character of the ancient Romans, as subtilty, cowardice, and a slavish disposition, do that of the modern. The old Spaniards were restless, turbulent, and so addicted to war, that many of them killed themselves when deprived of their arms by the Romans. One would find an equal difficulty at present (at least one would have found it fifty years ago) to rouse up the modern Spaniards to arms. The Italians were all soldiers of fortune, and hired themselves into the Roman armies. Their posterity made use of foreigners for the same purpose that the Romans did their ancestors. Though some few strokes of the French character be the same with that which Cæsar has ascribed to the Gauls; yet what comparison between the civility, humanity, and knowledge of the modern inhabitants of that country, and the ignorance, barbarity, and grossness of the ancient? Not to insist upon the great difference between the present possessors of Britain, and those before the Roman conquest, we may observe, that our ancestors, a few centuries ago, were sunk into the most abject superstition. Last century they were inflamed with the most furious enthusiasm, and are now settled into the most cool indifference, with regard to religious matters, that is to be found in any nation of the world.

*Fourthly,* Where several neighbouring nations have a very close communication together, either by policy, commerce, or travelling, they acquire a

similitude of manners, proportioned to the communication. Thus, all the Franks appear to have a uniform character to the Eastern nations. The differences among them are like the peculiar accents of different provinces, which are not distinguishable except by an ear accustomed to them, and which commonly escape a foreigner.

*Ninthly*, We may often remark a wonderful mixture of manners and characters in the same nation, speaking the same language, and subject to the same government: and in this particular the English are the most remarkable of any people that perhaps ever were in the world. Nor is this to be ascribed to the mutability and uncertainty of their climate, or to any other *physical* causes, since all these causes take place in the neighbouring country of Scotland, without having the same effect. Where the government of a nation is altogether republican, it is apt to beget a peculiar set of manners. Where it is altogether monarchical, it is more apt to have the same effect; the imitation of superiors spreading the national manners faster among the people. If the governing part of a state consist altogether of merchants, as in Holland, their uniform way of life will fix their character. If it consists chiefly of nobles and landed gentry, like Germany, France, and Spain, the same effect follows. The genius of a particular sect or religion is also apt to mould the manners of a people. But the English government is a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. The people in authority are composed of gentry and merchants. All sects of religion are to be found among them; and the great liberty and independency which every man enjoys, allows him to display the manners peculiar to him. Hence the English, of any people in the universe, have the least of a national character, unless this very singularity may pass for such.

If the characters of men depended on the air and



the Spaniards, Turks, and Chinese, are noted for gravity and a serious deportment, without any such difference of climate as to produce this difference of temper.

The Greeks and Romans, who called all other nations barbarians, confined genius and a fine understanding to the more southern climates, and pronounced the northern nations incapable of all knowledge and civility. But our Island has produced as great men, either for action or learning, as Greece or Italy has to boast of.

It is pretended, that the sentiments of men become more delicate as the country approaches nearer to the sun; and that the taste of beauty and elegance receives proportional improvements in every latitude, as we may particularly observe of the languages, of which the more southern are smooth and melodious, the northern harsh and untunable. But this observation holds not universally. The Arabic is uncouth and disagreeable; the Muscovite soft and musical. Energy, strength, and harshness, form the character of the Latin tongue. The Italian is the most liquid, smooth, and effeminate language that can possibly be imagined. Every language will depend somewhat on the manners of the people; but much more on that original stock of words and sounds which they received from their ancestors, and which remain unchangeable, even while their manners admit of the greatest alterations. Who can doubt, but the English are at present a more polite and knowing people than the Greeks were for several ages after the siege of Troy? Yet there is no comparison between the language of Milton and that of Homer. Nay, the greater are the alterations and improvements which happen in the manners of a people, the less can be expected in their language. A few eminent and refined geniuses will communicate their taste and knowledge to a whole people, and



learning, by its becoming too common. "Formerly," says Juvenal, "science was confined to Greece and Italy. Now the whole world emulates Athens and Rome. Eloquent Gaul has taught Britain, knowing in the laws. Even Thule entertains thoughts of hiring rhetoricians for its instruction." This state of learning is remarkable; because Juvenal is himself the last of the Roman writers that possessed any degree of genius. Those who succeeded are valued for nothing but the matters of fact of which they give us information. I hope the late conversion of Muscovy to the study of the sciences, will not prove a like prognostic to the present period of learning.

Cardinal Bentivoglio gives the preference to the northern nations above the southern with regard to candour and sincerity; and mentions, on the one hand, the Spaniards and Italians, and, on the other, the Flemings and Germans. But I am apt to think that this has happened by accident. The ancient Romans seem to have been a candid, sincere people, as are the modern Turks. But if we must needs suppose that this event has arisen from fixed causes, we may only conclude from it, that all extremes are apt to concur, and are commonly attended with the same consequences. Treachery is the usual concomitant of ignorance and barbarism; and if civilized nations ever embrace subtle and crooked politics, it is from an excess of refinement, which makes them disdain the plain direct path to power and glory.

Most conquests have gone from north to south; and it has hence been inferred, that the northern nations possess a superior degree of courage and ferocity. But it would have been juster to have said, that most conquests are made by poverty and want upon plenty and riches. The Saracens, leaving the deserts of Arabia, carried their conquests northwards upon all the fertile provinces

of the Roman empire, and met the Turks half way, who were coming southwards from the deserts of Tartary

An eminent writer<sup>1</sup> has remarked, that all *courageous animals are also carnivorous*, and that greater courage is to be expected in a people, such as the English, whose food is strong and hearty, than in the half-starved commonalty of other countries. But the Swedes, notwithstanding their disadvantages in this particular, are not inferior, in martial courage, to any nation that ever was in the world

In general, we may observe, that courage, of all national qualities, is the most precarious, because it is exerted only at intervals, and by a few in every nation, whereas industry, knowledge, civility, may be of constant and universal use, and for several ages may become habitual to the whole people. If courage be preserved, it must be by discipline, example, and opinion. The tenth legion of Cæsar, and the regiment of Picardy in France, were formed promiscuously from among the citizens, but having once entertained a notion that they were the best troops in the service, this very opinion really made them such

As a proof how much courage depends on opinion, we may observe, that, of the two chief tribes of the Greeks, the Dorians and Ionians, the former were always esteemed, and always appeared, more brave and manly than the latter, though the colonies of both the tribes were interspersed and intermingled throughout all the extent of Greece, the Lesser Asia, Sicily, Italy, and the islands of the Ægean Sea. The Athenians were the only Ionians that ever had any reputation for valour or military achievements, though even these were deemed inferior to the Lacedæmonians, the bravest of the Dorians

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Temple's Account of the Netherlands



The only observation with regard to the difference of men in different climates, on which we can rest any weight, is the vulgar one, that people, in the northern regions, have a greater inclination to strong liquors, and those in the southern to love and women. One can assign a very probable *physical* cause for this difference. Wine and distilled waters warm the frozen blood in the colder climates, and fortify men against the injuries of the weather; as the genial heat of the sun, in the countries exposed to his beams, inflames the blood, and exalts the passion between the sexes.

Perhaps, too, the matter may be accounted for by *moral* causes. All strong liquors are rarer in the north, and consequently are more coveted. Diodorus Siculus tells us that the Gauls, in his time, were great drunkards, and much addicted to wine; chiefly, I suppose, from its rarity and novelty. On the other hand, the heat in the southern climates obliging men and women to go half naked, thereby renders their frequent commerce more dangerous, and inflames their mutual passion. This makes parents and husbands more jealous and reserved, which still further inflames the passion. Not to mention, that as women ripen sooner in the southern regions, it is necessary to observe greater jealousy and care in their education; it being evident, that a girl of twelve cannot possess equal discretion to govern this passion with one who feels not its violence till she be seventeen or eighteen. Nothing so much encourages the passion of love as ease and leisure, or is more destructive to it than industry and hard labour; and as the necessities of men are evidently fewer in the warm climates than in the cold ones, this circumstance alone may make a considerable difference between them.

But perhaps the fact is doubtful, that nature has, either from moral or physical causes, distributed



mind and understanding depend. And this is agreeable to the analogy of nature. The races of animals never degenerate when carefully attended to; and horses, in particular, always show their blood in their shape, spirit, and swiftness. But a coxcomb may beget a philosopher, as a man of virtue may leave a worthless progeny.

I shall conclude this subject with observing, that though the passion for liquor be more brutal and debasing than love, which, when properly managed, is the source of all politeness and refinement; yet this gives not so great an advantage to the southern climates as we may be apt, at first sight, to imagine. When love goes beyond a certain pitch, it renders men jealous, and cuts off the free intercourse between the sexes, on which the politeness of a nation will commonly much depend. And if we would subtilize and refine upon this point, we might observe, that the people, in very temperate climates, are the most likely to attain all sorts of improvement, their blood not being so inflamed as to render them jealous, and yet being warm enough to make them set a due value on the charms and endowments of the fair sex.



disagreeable to the mind as the languid, listless state of indolence into which it falls upon the removal of all passion and occupation. To get rid of this painful situation, it seeks every amusement and pursuit; business, gaming, shows, executions; whatever will rouse the passions and take its attention from itself. No matter what the passion is; let it be disagreeable, afflicting, melancholy, disordered; it is still better than that insipid languor which arises from perfect tranquillity and repose.

It is impossible not to admit this account as being, at least in part, satisfactory. You may observe, when there are several tables of gaming, that all the company run to those where the deepest play is, even though they find not there the best players. The view, or, at least, imagination of high passions, arising from great loss or gain, affects the spectator by sympathy, gives him some touches of the same passions, and serves him for a momentary entertainment. It makes the time pass the easier with him, and is some relief to that oppression under which men commonly labour when left entirely to their own thoughts and meditations.

We find that common liars always magnify, in their narrations, all kinds of danger, pain, distress, sickness, deaths, murders, and cruelties, as well as joy, beauty, mirth, and magnificence. It is an absurd secret which they have for pleasing their company, fixing their attention, and attaching them to such marvellous relation by the passions and emotions which they excite.

There is, however, a difficulty in applying to the present subject, in its full extent, this solution, however ingenious and satisfactory it may appear. It is certain that the same object of distress, which pleases in a tragedy, were it really set before us, would give the most unfeigned uneasiness, though it be then the most effectual cure to languor and indolence. Monsieur Fontenelle seems to have been

sensible of this difficulty, and accordingly attempts another solution of the phenomenon, at least makes some addition to the theory above mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

"Pleasure and pain," says he, "which are two sentiments so different in themselves, differ not so much in their cause. From the instance of tickling it appears, that the movement of pleasure, pushed a little too far, becomes pain, and that the movement of pain, a little moderate, becomes pleasure. Hence it proceeds, that there is such a thing as a sorrow, soft and agreeable: it is a pain weakened and diminished. The heart likes naturally to be moved and affected. Melancholy objects suit it, and even disastrous and sorrowful, provided they are softened by some circumstance. It is certain, that, on the theatre, the representation has almost the effect of reality; yet it has not altogether that effect. However we may be hurried away by the spectacle, whatever dominion the senses and imagination may usurp over the reason, there still lurks at the bottom a certain idea of falsehood in the whole of what we see. This idea, though weak and disguised, suffices to diminish the pain which we suffer from the misfortunes of those whom we love, and to reduce that affliction to such a pitch as converts it into a pleasure. We weep for the misfortune of a hero in whom we are attached. In the same instant we comfort ourselves by reflecting, that it is nothing but a fiction: and it is precisely that mixture of sentiments which composes an agreeable sorrow, and tears that delight us. But, as that affliction which is caused by exterior and sensible objects is stronger than the consolation which arises from an internal reflection, they are the effects and symptoms of sorrow that ought to predominate in the composition."

This solution seems just and convincing: but perhaps it wants still some new addition, in order to

<sup>1</sup> *Reflections sur la Poétique*, § 30.

make it answer fully the phenomenon which we here examine. All the passions, excited by eloquence, are agreeable in the highest degree, as well as those which are moved by painting and the theatre. The *Epilogues of Cicero* are, on this account chiefly, the delight of every reader of taste; and it is difficult to read some of them without the deepest sympathy and sorrow. His merit as an orator, no doubt, depends much on his success in this particular. When he had raised tears in his judges and all his audience, they were then the most highly delighted, and expressed the greatest satisfaction with the pleader. The pathetic description of the butchery made by Verres of the Sicilian captains, is a masterpiece of this kind: but I believe none will affirm, that the being present at a melancholy scene of that nature would afford any entertainment. Neither is the sorrow here softened by fiction; for the audience were convinced of the reality of every circumstance. What is it then which in this case raises a pleasure from the bosom of uneasiness, so to speak, and a pleasure which still retains all the features and outward symptoms of distress and sorrow?

I answer: this extraordinary effect proceeds from that very eloquence with which the melancholy scene is represented. The genius required to paint objects in a lively manner, the art employed in collecting all the pathetic circumstances, the judgment displayed in disposing them; the exercise, I say, of these noble talents, together with the force of expression, and beauty of oratorical numbers, diffuse the highest satisfaction on the audience, and excite the most delightful movements. By this means, the uneasiness of the melancholy passions is not only overpowered and effaced by something stronger of an opposite kind, but the whole impulse of those passions is converted into pleasure, and swells the delight which the eloquence raises in us. The same





feeling, not merely by weakening or diminishing the sorrow. You may by degrees weaken a real sorrow, till it totally disappears; yet in none of its gradations will it ever give pleasure: except, perhaps, by accident, to a man sunk under lethargic indolence, whom it rouses from that languid state.

To confirm this theory, it will be sufficient to produce other instances, where the subordinate movement is converted into the predominant, and gives force to it, though of a different, and even sometimes though of a contrary nature.

Novelty naturally rouses the mind, and attracts our attention; and the movements which it causes are always converted into any passion belonging to the object, and join their force to it. Whether an event excite joy or sorrow, pride or shame, anger or good-will, it is sure to produce a stronger affection, when new or unusual. And though novelty of itself be agreeable, it fortifies the painful, as well as agreeable passions.

Had you any intention to move a person extremely by the narration of any event, the best method of increasing its effect would be artfully to delay informing him of it, and first to excite his curiosity and impatience before you let him into the secret. This is the artifice practised by Iago in the famous scene of Shakspeare; and every spectator is sensible, that Othello's jealousy acquires additional force from his preceding impatience, and that the subordinate passion is here readily transformed into the predominant one.

Difficulties increase passions of every kind; and by rousing our attention, and exciting our active powers, they produce an emotion which nourishes the prevailing affection.

Parents commonly love that child most whose sickly infirm frame of body has occasioned them the greatest pains, trouble, and anxiety, in rearing



naturally, of themselves, delightful to the mind : and when the object presented lays also hold of some affection, the pleasure still rises upon us, by the conversion of this subordinate movement into that which is predominant. The passion, though perhaps naturally, and when excited by the simple appearance of a real object, it may be painful ; yet is so smoothed, and softened, and mollified, when raised by the finer arts, that it affords the highest entertainment.

To confirm this reasoning, we may observe, that if the movements of the imagination be not predominant above those of the passion, a contrary effect follows ; and the former, being now subordinate, is converted into the latter, and still further increases the pain and affliction of the sufferer.

Who could ever think of it as a good expedient for comforting an afflicted parent, to exaggerate, with all the force of elocution, the irreparable loss which he has met with by the death of a favourite child ? The more power of imagination and expression you here employ, the more you increase his despair and affliction.

The shame, confusion, and terror of Verres, no doubt, rose in proportion to the noble eloquence and vehemence of Cicero : so also did his pain and uneasiness. These former passions were too strong for the pleasure arising from the beauties of elocution ; and operated, though from the same principle, yet in a contrary manner, to the sympathy, compassion, and indignation of the audience.

Lord Clarendon, when he approaches towards the catastrophe of the royal party, supposes that his narration must then become infinitely disagreeable ; and he hurries over the king's death without giving us one circumstance of it. He considers it as too horrid a scene to be contemplated with any satisfaction, or even without the utmost pain and aversion. He himself, as well as the readers of that age, were

too deeply concerned in the events, and felt a pain from subjects which an historian and a reader of another age would regard as the most pathetic and most interesting, and, by consequence, the most agreeable.

An action, represented in tragedy, may be too bloody and atrocious. It may excite such movements of horror as will not soften into pleasure; and the greatest energy of expression bestowed on descriptions of that nature, serves only to augment our uneasiness. Such is that action represented in the *Ambitious Step-mother*, where a venerable old man, raised to the height of fury and despair, rushes against a pillar, and, striking his head upon it, besmears it all over with mingled brains and gore. The English theatre abounds too much with such shocking images.

Even the common sentiments of compassion require to be softened by some agreeable affection, in order to give a thorough satisfaction to the audience. The mere suffering of plaintive virtue, under the triumphant tyranny and oppression of vice, forms a disagreeable spectacle, and is carefully avoided by all masters of the drama. In order to dismiss the audience with entire satisfaction and contentment, the virtue must either convert itself into a noble courageous despair, or the vice receive its proper punishment.

Most painters appear in this light to have been very unhappy in their subjects. As they wrought much for churches and convents, they have chiefly represented such horrible subjects as crucifixions and martyrdoms, where nothing appears but tortures, wounds, executions, and passive suffering, without any action or affection. When they turned their pencil from this ghastly mythology, they had commonly recourse to *Orul*, whose fictions, though passionate and agreeable, are scarcely natural or probable enough for painting.

The same inversion of that principle which is here insisted on, displays itself in common life, as in the effects of oratory and poetry. Raise so the subordinate passion that it becomes the predominant, it swallows up that affection which it before nourished and increased. Too much jealousy extinguishes love; too much difficulty renders us indifferent; too much sickness and infirmity disgusts a selfish and unkind parent.

What so disagreeable as the dismal, gloomy, disastrous stories, with which melancholy people entertain their companions? The uneasy passion being there raised alone, unaccompanied with any spirit, genius, or eloquence, conveys a pure uneasiness, and is attended with nothing that can soften it into pleasure or satisfaction.

## ESSAY XXIII

### OF THE STANDARD OF TASTE

THE great variety of Taste, as well as of opinion, which prevails in the world, is too obvious not to have fallen under every one's observation. Men of the most confined knowledge are able to remark a difference of taste in the narrow circle of their acquaintance, even where the persons have been educated under the same government, and have early imbibed the same prejudices. But those who can enlarge their view to contemplate distant nations and remote ages, are still more surprised at the great inconsistency and contrariety. We are apt to call *barbarous* whatever departs widely from our own taste and apprehension, but soon find the epithet of reproach retorted on us. And the highest arrogance and self-conceit is at last startled, on observing an equal assurance on all sides, and scruples, amidst such a contest of sentiment, to pronounce positively in its own favour.

As this variety of taste is obvious to the most careless inquirer, so will it be found, on examination, to be still greater in reality than in appearance. The sentiments of men often differ with regard to beauty and deformity of all kinds, even while their general discourse is the same. There are certain terms in every language which import blame, and others praise, and all men who use the same tongue must agree in their application of them. Every voice is united in applauding elegance, propriety,

simplicity, spirit in writing ; and in blaming fustian, affectation, coldness, and a false brilliancy. But when critics come to particulars, this seeming unanimity vanishes ; and it is found, that they had affixed a very different meaning to their expressions. In all matters of opinion and science, the case is opposite ; the difference among men is there oftener found to lie in generals than in particulars, and to be less in reality than in appearance. An explanation of the terms commonly ends the controversy : and the disputants are surprised to find that they had been quarrelling, while at bottom they agreed in their judgment.

Those who found morality on sentiment, more than on reason, are inclined to comprehend ethics under the former observation, and to maintain, that, in all questions which regard conduct and manners, the difference among men is really greater than at first sight it appears. It is indeed obvious, that writers of all nations and all ages concur in applauding justice, humanity, magnanimity, prudence, veracity ; and in blaming the opposite qualities. Even poets and other authors, whose compositions are chiefly calculated to please the imagination, are yet found, from Homer down to Fenelon, to inculcate the same moral precepts, and to bestow their applause and blame on the same virtues and vices. This great unanimity is usually ascribed to the influence of plain reason, which, in all these cases, maintains similar sentiments in all men, and prevents those controversies to which the abstract sciences are so much exposed. So far as the unanimity is real, this account may be admitted as satisfactory. But we must also allow, that some part of the seeming harmony in morals may be accounted for from the very nature of language. The word *virtue*, with its equivalent in every tongue, implies praise, as that of *vice* does blame ; and no one, without the most obvious and grossest

impropriety, could affix reproach to a term, which in general acceptation is understood in a good sense: or bestow applause, where the idiom requires disapprobation. Homer's general precepts, where he delivers any such, will never be controverted; but it is obvious, that, when he draws particular pictures of manners, and represents heroism in Achilles, and prudence in Ulysses, he intermixes a much greater degree of ferocity in the former, and of cunning and fraud in the latter, than Fenelon would admit of. The sage Ulysses, in the Greek poet, seems to delight in lies and fictions, and often employs them without any necessity, or even advantage. But his more scrupulous son, in the French epic writer, exposes himself to the most imminent perils, rather than depart from the most exact line of truth and veracity.

The admirers and followers of the Alcoran insist on the excellent moral precepts interspersed throughout that wild and absurd performance. But it is to be supposed, that the Arabic words, which correspond to the English, equity, justice, temperance, meekness, charity, were such as, from the constant use of that tongue, must always be taken in a good sense: and it would have argued the greatest ignorance, not of morals, but of language, to have mentioned them with any epithets, besides those of applause and approbation. But would we know, whether the pretended prophet had really attained a just sentiment of morals, let us attend to his narration, and we shall soon find, that he bestows praise on such instances of treachery, inhumanity, cruelty, revenge, bigotry, as are utterly incompatible with civilized society. No steady rule of right seems there to be attended to; and every action is blamed or praised, so far only as it is beneficial or hurtful to the true believers.

The merit of delivering true general precepts in ethics is indeed very small. Whoever recommends



any moral virtues, really does no more than is implied in the terms themselves. That people who invented the word *charity*, and used it in a good sense, inculcated more clearly, and much more efficaciously, the precept, *Be charitable*, than any pretended legislator or prophet, who should insert such a *maxim* in his writings. Of all expressions, those which, together with their other meaning, imply a degree either of blame or approbation, are the least liable to be perverted or mistaken.

It is natural for us to seek a *Standard of Taste*; a rule by which the various sentiments of men may be reconciled; at least a decision afforded confirming one sentiment, and condemning another.

There is a species of philosophy, which cuts off all hopes of success in such an attempt, and represents the impossibility of ever attaining any standard of taste. The difference, it is said, is very wide between judgment and sentiment. All sentiment is right; because sentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itself, and is always real, wherever a man is conscious of it. But all determinations of the understanding are not right; because they have a reference to something beyond themselves, to wit, real matter of fact; and are not always conformable to that standard. Among a thousand different opinions which different men may entertain of the same subject, there is one, and but one, that is just and true: and the only difficulty is to fix and ascertain it. On the contrary, a thousand different sentiments, excited by the same object, are all right; because no sentiment represents what is really in the object. It only marks a certain conformity or relation between the object and the organs or faculties of the mind; and if that conformity did not really exist, the sentiment could never possibly have being. Beauty is no quality in things themselves: it exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives

a different beauty. One person may even perceive deformity, where another is sensible of beauty, and every individual ought to acquiesce in his own sentiment without pretending to regulate those of others. To seek the real beauty, or real deformity, is as fruitless an inquiry, as to pretend to ascertain the real sweet or real bitter. According to the disposition of the organs, the same object may be both sweet and bitter, and the proverb has justly determined it to be fruitless to dispute concerning tastes. It is very natural, and even quite necessary, to extend this axiom to mental, as well as bodily taste, and thus common sense, which is so often at variance with philosophy, especially with the sceptical kind, is found, in one instance at least, to agree in pronouncing the same decision.

But though this axiom, by passing into a proverb, seems to have attained the sanction of common sense, there is certainly a species of common sense, which opposes it, at least serves to modify and restrain it. Whoever would assert an equality of genius and elegance between Ogilby and Milton, or Buoyin and Addison, would be thought to defend no less an extravagance, than if he had maintained a mole hill to be as high as Teneriffe, or a pond as extensive as the ocean. Though there may be found persons, who give the preference to the former authors, no one pays attention to such a taste, and we pronounce, without scruple, the sentiment of these pretended critics to be absurd and ridiculous. The principle of the natural equality of tastes is then totally forgot, and while we admit it on some occasions, where the objects seem near an equality, it appears an extravagant paradox, or rather a palpable absurdity, where objects so disproportioned are compared together.

It is evident that none of the rules of composition are fixed by reasonings *a priori*, or can be esteemed abstract conclusions of the understanding, from

comparing those habitudes and relations of ideas, which are eternal and immutable. Their foundation is the same with that of all the practical sciences, experience; nor are they any thing but general observations, concerning what has been universally found to please in all countries and in all ages. Many of the beauties of poetry, and even of eloquence, are founded on falsehood and fiction, on hyperboles, metaphors, and an abuse or perversion of terms from their natural meaning. To check the sallies of the imagination, and to reduce every expression to geometrical truth and exactness, would be the most contrary to the laws of criticism; because it would produce a work, which, by universal experience, has been found the most insipid and disagreeable. But though poetry can never submit to exact truth, it must be confined by rules of art, discovered to the author either by genius or observation. If some negligent or irregular writers have pleased, they have not pleased by their transgressions of rule or order, but in spite of these transgressions: they have possessed other beauties, which were conformable to just criticism; and the force of these beauties has been able to overpower censure, and give the mind a satisfaction superior to the disgust arising from the blemishes. Ariosto pleases; but not by his monstrous and improbable fictions, by his bizarre mixture of the serious and comic styles, by the want of coherence in his stories, or by the continual interruptions of his narration. He charms by the force and clearness of his expression, by the readiness and variety of his inventions, and by his natural pictures of the passions, especially those of the gay and amorous kind: and, however his faults may diminish our satisfaction, they are not able entirely to destroy it. Did our pleasure really arise from those parts of his poem, which we denominate faults, this would be no objection to criticism in general: it would only be an objection.

to those particular rules of criticism, which would establish such circumstances to be faults, and would represent them as universally blamable. If they are found to please, they cannot be faults, let the pleasure which they produce be ever so unexpected and unaccountable.

But though all the general rules of art are founded only on experience, and on the observation of the common sentiments of human nature, we must not imagine, that, on every occasion, the feelings of men will be conformable to these rules. Those finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature, and require the concurrence of many favourable circumstances to make them play with facility and exactness, according to their general and established principles. The least exterior hindrance to such small springs, or the least internal disorder, disturbs their motion, and confounds the operations of the whole machine. When we would make an experiment of this nature, and would try the force of any beauty or deformity, we must choose with care a proper time and place, and bring the fancy to a suitable situation and disposition. A perfect serenity of mind, a recollection of thought, a due attention to the object, if any of these circumstances be wanting, our experiment will be fallacious, and we shall be unable to judge of the catholic and universal beauty. The relation, which nature has placed between the form and the sentiment, will at least be more obscure; and it will require greater accuracy to trace and discern it. We shall be able to ascertain its influence, not so much from the operation of each particular beauty, as from the durable admiration which attends those works that have survived all the caprices of mode and fashion, all the mistakes of ignorance and envy.

The same Homer who pleased at Athens and Rome two thousand years ago, is still admired at

Paris and at London. All the changes of climate, government, religion, and language, have not been able to obscure his glory. Authority or prejudice may give a temporary vogue to a bad poet or orator ; but his reputation will never be durable or general. When his compositions are examined by posterity or by foreigners, the enchantment is dissipated, and his faults appear in their true colours. On the contrary, a real genius, the longer his works endure, and the more wide they are spread, the more sincere is the admiration which he meets with. Envy and jealousy have too much place in a narrow circle ; and even familiar acquaintance with his person may diminish the applause due to his performances : but when these obstructions are removed, the beauties, which are naturally fitted to excite agreeable sentiments, immediately display their energy ; and while the world endures, they maintain their authority over the minds of men.

It appears, then, that amidst all the variety and caprice of taste, there are certain general principles of approbation or blame, whose influence a careful eye may trace in all operations of the mind. Some particular forms or qualities, from the original structure of the internal fabric are calculated to please, and others to displease ; and if they fail of their effect in any particular instance, it is from some apparent defect or imperfection in the organ. A man in a fever would not insist on his palate as able to decide concerning flavours ; nor would one affected with the jaundice pretend to give a verdict with regard to colours. In each creature there is a sound and a defective state ; and the former alone can be supposed to afford us a true standard of taste and sentiment. If, in the sound state of the organ, there be an entire or a considerable uniformity of sentiment among men, we may thence derive an idea of the perfect beauty ; in like manner as the appearance of objects in daylight, to the eye of a

man in health, is denominated their true and real colour, even while colour is allowed to be merely a phantasm of the senses

Many and frequent are the defects in the internal organs, which prevent or weaken the influence of those general principles, on which depends our sentiment of beauty or deformity. Though some objects, by the structure of the mind, be naturally calculated to give pleasure, it is not to be expected that in every individual the pleasure will be equally felt. Particular incidents and situations occur, which either throw a false light on the objects, or hinder the true from conveying to the imagination the proper sentiment and perception.

One obvious cause why many feel not the proper sentiment of beauty, is the want of that *delicacy* of imagination which is requisite to convey a sensibility of those finer emotions. This delicacy every one pretends to: every one talks of it, and would reduce every kind of taste or sentiment to its standard. But as our intention in this Essay is to mingle some light of the understanding with the feelings of sentiment, it will be proper to give a more accurate definition of delicacy than has hitherto been attempted. And not to draw our philosophy from too profound a source, we shall have recourse to a noted story in Don Quixote.

It is with good reason, says Sancho to the squire with the great nose, that I pretend to have a judgment in wine: this is a quality hereditary in our family. Two of my kinsmen were once called to give their opinion of a log-head, which was supposed to be excellent, being old and of a good vintage. One of them tastes it, considers it, and, after mature reflection, pronounces the wine to be good, were it not for a small taste of leather which he perceived in it. The other, after using the same precautions, gives also his verdict in favour of the wine, but with the reserve of a taste of iron, which

he could easily distinguish. You cannot imagine how much they were both ridiculed for their judgment. But who laughed in the end? On emptying the hogshead, there was found at the bottom an old key with a leathern thong tied to it.

The great resemblance between mental and bodily taste will easily teach us to apply this story. Though it be certain that beauty and deformity, more than sweet and bitter, are not qualities in objects, but belong entirely to the sentiment, internal or external, it must be allowed, that there are certain qualities in objects which are fitted by nature to produce those particular feelings. Now, as these qualities may be found in a small degree, or may be mixed and confounded with each other, it often happens that the taste is not affected with such minute qualities, or is not able to distinguish all the particular flavours, amidst the disorder in which they are presented. Where the organs are so fine as to allow nothing to escape them, and at the same time so exact as to perceive every ingredient in the composition, this we call delicacy of taste, whether we employ these terms in the literal or metaphorical sense. Here then the general rules of beauty are of use, being drawn from established models, and from the observation of what pleases or displeases, when presented singly and in a high degree; and if the same qualities, in a continued composition, and in a smaller degree, affect not the organs with a sensible delight or uneasiness, we exclude the person from all pretensions to this delicacy. To produce these general rules or avowed patterns of composition, is like finding the key with the leathern thong, which justified the verdict of Sancho's kinsmen, and confounded those pretended judges who had condemned them. Though the hogshead had never been emptied, the taste of the one was still equally delicate, and that of the other equally dull and languid; but it would have been more difficult to

have proved the superiority of the former, to the conviction of every bystander. In like manner, though the beauties of writing had never been methodized, or reduced to general principles; though no excellent models had ever been acknowledged, the different degrees of taste would still have subsisted, and the judgment of one man been preferable to that of another, but it would not have been so easy to silence the bad critic, who might always insist upon his particular sentiment, and refuse to submit to his antagonist. But when we show him an avowed principle of art, when we illustrate this principle by examples whose operation, from his own particular taste, he acknowledges to be conformable to the principle, when we prove that the same principle may be applied to the present case, where he did not perceive or feel its influence, he must conclude upon the whole, that the fault lies in himself, and that he wants the delicacy which is requisite to make him sensible of every beauty and every blemish in any composition or discourse.

It is acknowledged to be the perfection of every sense or faculty, to perceive with exactness its most minute objects, and allow nothing to escape its notice and observation. The smaller the objects are which become sensible to the eye, the finer is that organ, and the more elaborate its make and composition. A good palate is not tried by strong flavours, but by a mixture of small ingredients, where we are still sensible of each part, notwithstanding its minuteness and its confusion with the rest. In like manner, a quick and acute perception of beauty and deformity must be the perfection of our mental taste, nor can a man be satisfied with himself while he suspects that any excellence or blemish in a discourse has passed him unobserved. In this case, the perfection of the man, and the perfection of the sense of feeling, are found to be united. A very delicate palate, on many occasions,



may be a great inconvenience both to a man himself and to his friends. But a delicate taste of wit or beauty must always be a desirable quality, because it is the source of all the finest and most innocent enjoyments of which human nature is susceptible. In this decision the sentiments of all mankind are agreed. Wherever you can ascertain a delicacy of taste, it is sure to meet with approbation ; and the best way of ascertaining it is, to appeal to those models and principles which have been established by the uniform consent and experience of nations and ages.

But though there be naturally a wide difference, in point of delicacy, between one person and another, nothing tends further to increase and improve this talent, than *practice* in a particular art, and the frequent survey or contemplation of a particular species of beauty. When objects of any kind are first presented to the eye or imagination, the sentiment which attends them is obscure and confused ; and the mind is, in a great measure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits or defects. The taste cannot perceive the several excellences of the performance, much less distinguish the particular character of each excellency, and ascertain its quality and degree. If it pronounce the whole in general to be beautiful or deformed, it is the utmost that can be expected ; and even this judgment, a person so unpractised will be apt to deliver with great hesitation and reserve. But allow him to acquire experience in those objects, his feeling becomes more exact and nice : he not only perceives the beauties and defects of each part, but marks the distinguishing species of each quality, and assigns it suitable praise or blame. A clear and distinct sentiment attends him through the whole survey of the objects ; and he discerns that very degree and kind of approbation or displeasure which each part is naturally fitted to produce. The

mist dissipates which seemed formerly to hang over the object, the organ acquires greater perfection in its operations, and can pronounce, without danger of mistake, concerning the merits of every performance. In a word, the same address and dexterity which practice gives to the execution of any work, is also acquired by the same means in the judging of it.

So advantageous is practice in the discernment of beauty, that, before we can give judgment on any work of importance, it will even be requisite that that very individual performance be more than once perused by us, and be surveyed in different lights with attention and deliberation. There is a flutter or hurry of thought which often is the first perusal of any piece, and which confounds the genuine sentiment of beauty. The relation of the parts is not discerned: the true characters of style are little distinguished. The several perfections and defects seem wrapped up in a species of confusion, and present themselves indistinctly to the imagination. Not to mention, that there is a species of beauty, which, as it is florid and superficial, pleases at first; but being found incompatible with a just expression either of reason or passion, soon falls upon the taste, and is then rejected with disdain, at least rated at a much lower value.

It is impossible to continue in the practice of contemplating any order of beauty, without being frequently obliged to form *comparisons* between the several species and degrees of excellence, and estimating their proportion to each other. A man who has had no opportunity of comparing the different kinds of beauty, is indeed totally unqualified to pronounce an opinion with regard to any object presented to him. By comparison alone we fix the epithets of praise or blame and learn how to assign the due degree of each. The coarsest daubing contains a certain lustre of colours and exactness of

imitation, which are so far beauties, and would affect the mind of a peasant or Indian with the highest admiration. The most vulgar ballads are not entirely destitute of harmony or nature; and none but a person familiarized to superior beauties would pronounce their members harsh, or narration uninteresting. A great inferiority of beauty gives pain to a person conversant in the highest excellence of the kind, and is for that reason pronounced a deformity; as the most finished object with which we are acquainted is naturally supposed to have reached the pinnacle of perfection, and to be entitled to the highest applause. One accustomed to see, and examine, and weigh the several performances, admired in different ages and nations, can alone rate the merits of a work exhibited to his view, and assign its proper rank among the productions of genius.

But to enable a critic the more fully to execute this undertaking, he must preserve his mind free from all *prejudice*, and allow nothing to enter into his consideration, but the very object which is submitted to his examination. We may observe, that every work of art, in order to produce its due effect on the mind, must be surveyed in a certain point of view, and cannot be fully relished by persons whose situation, real or imaginary, is not conformable to that which is required by the performance. An orator addresses himself to a particular audience, and must have a regard to their particular genius, interests, opinions, passions, and prejudices; otherwise he hopes in vain to govern their resolutions, and inflame their affections. Should they even have entertained some prepossessions against him, however unreasonable, he must not overlook this disadvantage: but, before he enters upon the subject, must endeavour to conciliate their affection, and acquire their good graces. A critic of a different age or nation, who should peruse this discourse,

must have all these circumstances in his eye, and must place himself in the same situation as the audience, in order to form a true judgment of the oration. In like manner, when any work is addressed to the public, though I should have a friendship or enmity with the author, I must depart from this situation, and, considering myself as a man in general, forget, if possible, my individual being, and my peculiar circumstances. A person influenced by prejudice complies not with this condition, but obstinately maintains his natural position, without placing himself in that point of view which the performance supposes. If the work be addressed to persons of a different age or nation, he makes no allowance for their peculiar views and prejudices; but, full of the manners of his own age and country, rashly condemns what seemed *admirable in the eyes of those for whom alone the discourse was calculated*. If the work be executed for the public, he never sufficiently enlarges his comprehension, or forgets his interest as a friend or enemy, as a rival or commentator. By this means his sentiments are perverted; nor have the same beauties and blemishes the same influence upon him, as if he had imposed a proper violence on his imagination, and had forgotten himself for a moment. So far his taste evidently departs from the true standard, and of consequence loses all credit and authority.

It is well known, that, in all questions submitted to the understanding, prejudice is destructive of sound judgment, and perverts all operations of the intellectual faculties: it is no less contrary to good taste; nor has it less influence to corrupt our sentiment of beauty. It belongs to *good sense* to check its influence in both cases; and in this respect, as well as in many others, reason, if not an essential part of taste, is at least requisite to the operations of this latter faculty. In all the nobler productions

of genius, there is a mutual relation and correspondence of parts; nor can either the beauties or blemishes be perceived by him whose thought is not capacious enough to comprehend all those parts, and compare them with each other, in order to perceive the consistence and uniformity of the whole. Every work of art has also a certain end or purpose for which it is calculated; and is to be deemed more or less perfect, as it is more or less fitted to attain this end. The object of eloquence is to persuade, of history to instruct, of poetry to please, by means of the passions and the imagination. These ends we must carry constantly in our view when we peruse any performance; and we must be able to judge how far the means employed are adapted to their respective purposes. Besides, every kind of composition, even the most poetical, is nothing but a chain of propositions and reasonings; not always, indeed, the justest and most exact, but still plausible and specious, however disguised by the colouring of the imagination. The persons introduced in tragedy and epic poetry must be represented as reasoning, and thinking, and concluding, and acting, suitably to their character and circumstances; and without judgment, as well as taste and invention, a poet can never hope to succeed in so delicate an undertaking. Not to mention, that the same excellence of faculties which contributes to the improvement of reason, the same clearness of conception, the same exactness of distinction, the same vivacity of apprehension, are essential to the operations of true taste, and are its infallible concomitants. It seldom or never happens, that a man of sense, who has experience in any art, cannot judge of its beauty; and it is no less rare to meet with a man who has a just taste without a sound understanding.

Thus, though the principles of taste be universal, and nearly, if not entirely, the same in all men; yet few are qualified to give judgment on any work



questions of fact, not of sentiment. Whether any particular person be endowed with good sense and a delicate imagination, free from prejudice, may often be the subject of dispute, and be liable to great discussion and inquiry: but that such a character is valuable and estimable, will be agreed in by all mankind. Where these doubts occur, men can do no more than in other disputable questions which are submitted to the understanding: they must produce the best arguments that their invention suggests to them; they must acknowledge a true and decisive standard to exist somewhere, to wit, real existence and matter of fact; and they must have indulgence to such as differ from them in their appeals to this standard. It is sufficient for our present purpose, if we have proved, that the taste of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that some men in general, however difficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged by universal sentiment to have a preference above others.

But, in reality, the difficulty of finding, even in particulars, the standard of taste, is not so great as it is represented. Though in speculation we may readily avow a certain criterion in science, and deny it in sentiment, the matter is found in practice to be much more hard to ascertain in the former case than in the latter. Theories of abstract philosophy, systems of profound theology, have prevailed during one age: in a successive period these have been universally exploded: their absurdity has been detected: other theories and systems have supplied their place, which again gave place to their successors: and nothing has been experienced more liable to the revolutions of chance and fashion than these pretended decisions of science. The case is not the same with the beauties of eloquence and poetry. Just expressions of passion and nature are sure, after a little time, to gain public applause,

which they maintain for ever—Aristotle, and Plato, and Epicurus, and Descartes, may successively yield to each other: but Terence and Virgil maintain an universal, undisputed empire over the minds of men. The abstract philosophy of Cicero has lost its credit: the vehemence of his oratory is still the object of our admiration.

Though men of delicate taste be rare, they are easily to be distinguished in society by the soundness of their understanding, and the superiority of their faculties above the rest of mankind. The ascendant, which they acquire, gives a prevalence to that lively approbation with which they receive any productions of genius, and renders it generally predominant. Many men, when left to themselves, have but a faint and dubious perception of beauty, who yet are capable of relishing any fine stroke which is pointed out to them. Every convert to the admiration of the real poet or orator, is the cause of some new conversion. And though prejudices may prevail for a time, they never unite in celebrating any rival to the true genius, but yield at last to the force of nature and just sentiment. Thus, though a civilized nation may easily be mistaken in the choice of their admired philosopher, they never have been found long to err, in their affection for a favourite epic or tragic author.

But notwithstanding all our endeavours to fix a standard of taste, and reconcile the discordant apprehensions of men, there still remain two sources of variation, which are not sufficient indeed to confound all the boundaries of beauty and deformity, but will often serve to produce a difference in the degrees of our approbation or blame. The one is the different humours of particular men; the other, the particular manners and opinions of our age and country. The general principles of taste are uniform to human nature: where men vary in their judgments, some defect or perversion in the faculties



may commonly be remarked ; proceeding either from prejudice, from want of practice, or want of delicacy : and there is just reason for approving one taste, and condemning another. But where there is such a diversity in the internal frame or external situation as is entirely blameless on both sides, and leaves no room to give one the preference above the other ; in that case a certain degree of diversity in judgment is unavoidable, and we seek in vain for a standard, by which we can reconcile the contrary sentiments.

A young man, whose passions are warm, will be more sensibly touched with amorous and tender images, than a man more advanced in years, who takes pleasure in wise, philosophical reflections, concerning the conduct of life, and moderation of the passions. At twenty, Ovid may be the favourite author, Horace at forty, and perhaps Tacitus at fifty. Vainly would we, in such cases, endeavour to enter into the sentiments of others, and divest ourselves of those propensities which are natural to us. We choose our favourite author as we do our friend, from a conformity of humour and disposition. Mirth or passion, sentiment or reflection ; whichever of these most predominates in our temper, it gives us a peculiar sympathy with the writer who resembles us.

One person is more pleased with the sublime, another with the tender, a third with raillery. One has a strong sensibility to blemishes, and is extremely studious of correctness ; another has a more lively feeling of beauties, and pardons twenty absurdities and defects for one elevated or pathetic stroke. The ear of this man is entirely turned towards conciseness and energy ; that man is delighted with a copious, rich, and harmonious expression. Simplicity is affected by one ; ornament by another. Comedy, tragedy, satire, odes, have each its partisans, who prefer that particular species

of writing to all others. It is plainly an error in a critic, to confine his approbation to one species or style of writing, and condemn all the rest. But it is almost impossible not to feel a predilection for that which suits our particular turn and disposition. Such performances are innocent and unavoidable, and can never reasonably be the object of dispute, because there is no standard by which they can be decided.

For a like reason, we are more pleased, in the course of our reading, with pictures and characters that resemble objects which are found in our own age and country, than with those which describe a different set of customs. It is not without some effort that we reconcile ourselves to the simplicity of ancient manners, and behold princesses carrying water from the spring, and kings and heroes dressing their own victuals. We may allow in general, that the representation of such manners is no fault in the author, nor deformity in the piece, but we are not so sensibly touched with them. For this reason, comedy is not easily transferred from one age or nation to another. A Frenchman or Englishman is not pleased with the *Andria* of Terence, or *Clitella* of Machiavel, where the fine lady, upon whom all the play turns, never once appears to the spectators, but is always kept behind the scenes, suitably to the reserved humour of the ancient Greeks and modern Italians. A man of learning and reflection can make allowance for these peculiarities of manners, but a common audience can never divest themselves so far of their usual ideas and sentiments, as to relish pictures which nowise resemble them.

But here there occurs a reflection, which may, perhaps, be useful in examining the celebrated controversy concerning ancient and modern learning, where we often find the one side excusing any seeming absurdity in the ancients from the manners of

the age, and the other refusing to admit this excuse, or at least admitting it only as an apology for the author, not for the performance. In my opinion, the proper boundaries in this subject have seldom been fixed between the contending parties. Where any innocent peculiarities of manners are represented, such as those above mentioned, they ought certainly to be admitted ; and a man who is shocked with them, gives an evident proof of false delicacy and refinement. The poet's *monument more durable than brass*, must fall to the ground like common brick or clay, were men to make no allowance for the continual revolutions of manners and customs, and would admit of nothing but what was suitable to the prevailing fashion. Must we throw aside the pictures of our ancestors, because of their ruffs and farthingales ? But where the ideas of morality and decency alter from one age to another, and where vicious manners are described, without being marked with the proper characters of blame and disapprobation, this must be allowed to disfigure the poem, and to be a real deformity. I cannot, nor is it proper I should, enter into such sentiments ; and however I may excuse the poet, on account of the manners of his age, I can never relish the composition. The want of humanity and of decency, so conspicuous in the characters drawn by several of the ancient poets, even sometimes by Homer and the Greek tragedians, diminishes considerably the merit of their noble performances, and gives modern authors an advantage over them. We are not interested in the fortunes and sentiments of such rough heroes ; we are displeased to find the limits of vice and virtue so much confounded ; and whatever indulgence we may give to the writer on account of his prejudices, we cannot prevail on ourselves to enter into his sentiments, or bear an affection to characters which we plainly discover to be blamable.

The case is not the same with moral principles as with speculative opinions of any kind. These are in continual flux and revolution. The son embraces a different system from the father. Nay, there scarcely is any man, who can boast of great constancy and uniformity in this particular. Whatever speculative errors may be found in the polite writings of any age or country, they detract but little from the value of those compositions. There needs but a certain turn of thought or imagination to make us enter into all the opinions which then prevailed, and relish the sentiments or conclusions derived from them. But a very violent effort is requisite to change our judgment of manners, and excite sentiments of approbation or blame, love or hatred, different from those to which the mind, from long custom, has been familiarized. And where a man is confident of the rectitude of that moral standard by which he judges, he is justly jealous of it, and will not pervert the sentiments of his heart for a moment, in complaisance to any writer whatsoever.

Of all speculative errors, those which regard religion are the most excusable in compositions of genius, nor is it ever permitted to judge of the civility or wisdom of any people, or even of single persons, by the grossness or refinement of their theological principles. The same good sense that directs men in the ordinary occurrences of life, is not hearkened to in religious matters, which are supposed to be placed altogether above the cognizance of human reason. On this account, all the absurdities of the Pagan system of theology must be overlooked by every critic, who would pretend to form a just notion of ancient poetry, and our posterity, in their turn, must have the same indulgence to their forefathers. No religious principles can ever be imputed as a fault to any poet, while they remain merely principles, and take not such

strong possession of his heart as to lay him under the imputation of *bigotry or superstition*. Where that happens, they confound the sentiments of morality, and alter the natural boundaries of vice and virtue. They are therefore eternal blemishes, according to the principle above mentioned; nor are the prejudices and false opinions of the age sufficient to justify them.

It is essential to the Roman Catholic religion to inspire a violent hatred of every other worship, and to represent all Pagans, Mahometans, and heretics, as the objects of divine wrath and vengeance. Such sentiments, though they are in reality very blamable, are considered as virtues by the zealots of that communion, and are represented in their tragedies and epic poems as a kind of divine heroism. This bigotry has disfigured two very fine tragedies of the French theatre, *POLIEUCTE* and *ATHALIA*; where an intemperate zeal for particular modes of worship is set off with all the pomp imaginable, and forms the predominant character of the heroes. "What is this," says the sublime Joad to Josabet, finding her in discourse with Mathan the priest of Baal, "Does the daughter of David speak to this traitor? Are you not afraid lest the earth should open, and pour forth flames to devour you both? Or lest these holy walls should fall and crush you together? What is his purpose? Why comes that enemy of God hither to poison the air, which we breathe, with his horrid presence?" Such sentiments are received with great applause on the theatre of Paris; but at London the spectators would be full as much pleased to hear Achilles tell Agamemnon, that he was a dog in his forehead, and a deer in his heart; or Jupiter threaten Juno with a sound drubbing, if she will not be quiet.

Religious principles are also a blemish in any polite composition, when they rise up to superstition, and intrude themselves into every sentiment,

however remote from any connection with religion. It is no excuse for the poet, that the customs of his country had burdened life with so many religious ceremonies and observances, that no part of it was exempt from that yoke. It must for ever be ridiculous in Petrarch to compare his mistress, Laura, to Jesus Christ. Nor is it less ridiculous in that agreeable libertine, Boccace, very seriously to give thanks to God Almighty and the ladies, for their assistance in defending him against his enemies.



## PART II





## ESSAY I

### OF COMMERCE

THE greater part of mankind may be divided into two classes ; that of *shallow* thinkers, who fall short of the truth ; and that of *abstruse* thinkers, who go beyond it. The latter class are by far the most rare ; and, I may add, by far the most useful and valuable. They suggest hints at least, and start difficulties, which they want perhaps skill to pursue, but which may produce fine discoveries when handled by men who have a more just way of thinking. At worst, what they say is uncommon ; and if it should cost some pains to comprehend it, one has, however, the pleasure of hearing something that is new. An author is little to be valued who tells us nothing but what we can learn from every coffee-house conversation.

All people of *shallow* thought are apt to deery even those of *solid* understanding, as *abstruse* thinkers, and metaphysicians, and refiners ; and never will allow any thing to be just which is beyond their own weak conceptions. There are some cases, I own, where an extraordinary refinement affords a strong presumption of falsehood, and where no reasoning is to be trusted but what is natural and easy. When a man deliberates concerning his conduct in any *particular* affair, and forms schemes in politics, trade, economy, or any business in life, he never ought to draw his arguments too fine, or connect too long a chain of consequences together.

Something is sure to happen, that will disconcert his reasoning, and produce an event different from what he expected. But when we reason upon *general* subjects, one may justly affirm, that our speculations can scarcely ever be too fine, provided they be just; and that the difference between a common man and a man of genius is chiefly seen in the shallowness or depth of the principles upon which they proceed. General reasonings seem intricate, merely because they are general; nor is it easy for the bulk of mankind to distinguish, in a great number of particulars, that common circumstance in which they all agree, or to extract it, pure and unmixed, from the other superfluous circumstances. Every judgment or conclusion with them is particular. They cannot enlarge their view to those universal propositions which comprehend under them an infinite number of individuals, and include a whole science in a single theorem. Their eye is confounded with such an extensive prospect; and the conclusions derived from it, even though clearly expressed, seem intricate and obscure. But however intricate they may seem, it is certain that general principles, if just and sound, must always prevail in the general course of things, though they may fail in particular cases; and it is the chief business of philosophers to regard the general course of things. I may add, that it is also the chief business of politicians, especially in the domestic government of the state, where the public good, which is or ought to be their object, depends on the concurrence of a multitude of causes; not, as in foreign politics, on accidents and chances, and the caprices of a few persons. This therefore makes the difference between *particular* deliberations and *general* reasonings, and renders subtilty and refinement much more suitable to the latter than to the former.

I thought this introduction necessary before the

following discourses on *Commerce, Money, Interest, Balance of Trade, &c.*, where perhaps there will occur some principles which are uncommon, and which may seem too refined and subtle for such vulgar subjects. If false, let them be rejected, but no one ought to entertain a prejudice against them merely because they are out of the common road.

The greatness of a state, and the happiness of its subjects, how independent ~~soever~~ they may be supposed in some respects, are commonly allowed to be inseparable with regard to commerce; and as private men receive greater security in the possession of their trade and riches, from the power of the public, so the public becomes powerful in proportion to the opulence and extensive commerce of private men. This maxim is true in general, though I cannot forbear thinking that it may possibly admit of exceptions, and that we often establish it with too little reserve and limitation. There may be some circumstances where the commerce, and riches, and luxury of individuals, instead of adding strength in the public, will serve only to thin its armies, and diminish its authority among the neighbouring nations. Man is a very variable being, and susceptible of many different opinions, principles, and rules of conduct. What may be true, while he adheres to one way of thinking, will be found false, when he has embraced an opposite set of manners and opinions.

The bulk of every state may be divided into *husbandmen* and *manufacturers*. The former are employed in the culture of the land, the latter works up the materials furnished by the former, into all the commodities which are necessary or ornamental to human life. As soon as men quit their savage state, where they live chiefly by hunting and fishing, they must fall into these two classes, though the arts of agriculture employ, *at first*, the

most numerous part of the society.<sup>1</sup> Time and experience improve so much these arts, that the land may easily maintain a much greater number of men than those who are immediately employed in its culture, or who furnish the more necessary manufactures to such as are so employed.

If these superfluous hands apply themselves to the finer arts, which are commonly denominated the arts of *luxury*, they add to the happiness of the state, since they afford to many the opportunity of receiving enjoyments with which they would otherwise have been unacquainted. But may not another scheme be proposed for the employment of these superfluous hands? May not the sovereign lay claim to them, and employ them in fleets and armies, to increase the dominions of the state abroad, and spread its fame over distant nations? It is certain, that the fewer desires and wants are found in the proprietors and labourers of land, the fewer hands do they employ; and consequently, the superfluities of the land, instead of maintaining tradesmen and manufacturers, may support fleets and armies to a much greater extent than where a great many arts are required to minister to the luxury of particular persons. Here, therefore, seems to be a kind of opposition between the greatness of the state and the happiness of the subject. A state is never greater than when all its superfluous hands are employed in the service of the public. The ease and convenience of private persons require that these hands should be employed in their service.

<sup>1</sup> Mons. Melon, in his political Essay on Commerce, asserts, [that even at present, if you divide France into twenty parts, sixteen are labourers or peasants; two only artisans; one belonging to the law, church, and military; and one merchants, financiers, and bourgeois. This calculation is certainly very erroneous. In France, England, and indeed most parts of Europe, half of the inhabitants live in cities; and even of those who live in the country, a great number are artisans, perhaps above a third.

The one can never be satisfied but at the expense of the other. As the ambition of the sovereign must *entrench on the luxury of individuals*, so the luxury of individuals must diminish the force, and check the ambition, of the sovereign.

Nor is this reasoning merely chimerical, but it is founded on history and experience. The republic of Sparta was certainly more powerful than any state now in the world, consisting of an equal number of people, and this was owing entirely to the want of commerce and luxury. The Helotes were the labourers, the Spartans were the soldiers or gentlemen. It is evident that the labour of the Helotes could not have maintained so great a number of Spartans, had these latter lived in ease and idleness, and given employment to a great variety of trades and manufactures. The like policy may be remarked in Rome. And, indeed, throughout all ancient history it is observable, that the smallest republics raised and maintained greater armies than states, consisting of triple the number of inhabitants, are able to support at present. It is computed, that, in all European nations, the proportion between soldiers and people does not exceed one to a hundred. But we read, that the city of Rome alone, with its small territory, raised and maintained, in early times, ten legions against the Latins. Athens, the whole of whose dominions was not larger than Yorkshire, sent to the expedition against Sicily near forty thousand men. Dionysius the elder, it is said, maintained a standing army of a hundred thousand foot, and ten thousand horse, besides a large fleet of four hundred sail, though his territories extended no further than the city of Syracuse, about a third of the island of Sicily, and some seaport towns and garrisons on the coast of Italy and Illyricum. It is true, the ancient armies, in time of war, subsisted much upon plunder: but did not the enemy plunder in their turn? which was a

more ruinous way of levying a tax than any other that could be devised. In short, no probable reason can be assigned for the great power of the more ancient states above the modern, but their want of commerce and luxury. Few artisans were maintained by the labour of the farmers, and therefore more soldiers might live upon it. Livy says, that Rome, in his time, would find it difficult to raise as large an army as that which, in her early days, she sent out against the Gauls and Latins. Instead of those soldiers who fought for liberty and empire in Camillus's time, there were, in Augustus's days, musicians, painters, cooks, players, and tailors; and if the land was equally cultivated at both periods, it could certainly maintain equal numbers in the one profession as in the other. They added nothing to the mere necessities of life, in the latter period more than in the former.

It is natural on this occasion to ask, whether sovereigns may not return to the maxims of ancient policy and consult their own interest in this respect, more than the happiness of their subjects? I answer, that it appears to me almost impossible: and that because ancient policy was violent, and contrary to the more natural and usual course of things. It is well known with what peculiar laws Sparta was governed, and what a prodigy that republic is justly esteemed by every one who has considered human nature, as it has displayed itself in other nations, and other ages. Were the testimony of history less positive and circumstantial, such a government would appear a mere philosophical whim or fiction, and impossible ever to be reduced to practice. And though the Roman and other ancient republics were supported on principles somewhat more natural, yet was there an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, to make them submit to such grievous burdens. They were free states; they were small ones; and the age being martial, all their neighbours

were continually in arms. Freedom naturally begets public spirit, especially in small states; and this public spirit, this *amor patriæ*, must increase, when the public is almost in continual alarm, and men are obliged every moment to expose themselves to the greatest dangers for its defence. A continual succession of wars makes every citizen a soldier: he takes the field in his turn, and during his service he is chiefly maintained by himself. This service is indeed equivalent to a heavy tax, yet is it less felt by a people addicted to arms, who fight for honour and revenge more than pay, and are unacquainted with gain and industry, as well as pleasure. Not to mention the great equality of fortunes among the inhabitants of the ancient republics, where every field, belonging to a different proprietor, was able to maintain a family, and rendered the numbers of citizens very considerable, even without trade and manufactures.

But though the want of trade and manufactures among a free and very martial people, may some times have no other effect than to render the public

<sup>1</sup> The more ancient Romans lived in perpetual war with all their neighbours: and in old Latin the term *hostis* expressed both a stranger and an enemy. This is remarked by Cicero, but by him is ascribed to the humanity of his ancestors, who softened as much as possible the denomination of an enemy, by calling him by the same appellation which signified a stranger. *De Off.* lib. ii. It is however much more probable, from the manners of the times that the ferocity of those people was so great as to make them regard all strangers as enemies and call them by the same name. It is not, besides, consistent with the most common maxims of policy or of nature that any state should regard its public enemies with a friendly eye or preserve any such sentiments for them as the Roman orator would ascribe to his ancestors. Not to mention that the early Romans really exercised piracy, as we learn from their first treaties with Carthage preserved by Polybius lib. iii, and consequently, like the Saltee and Algerine rovers were actually at war with most nations: and a stranger and an enemy were with them almost synonymous.



more powerful, it is certain that, in the common course of human affairs, it will have a quite contrary tendency. Sovereigns must take mankind as they find them, and cannot pretend to introduce any violent change in their principles and ways of thinking. A long course of time, with a variety of accidents and circumstances, are requisite to produce those great revolutions, which so much diversify the face of human affairs. And the less natural any set of principles are, which support a particular society, the more difficulty will a legislator meet with in raising and cultivating them. It is his best policy to comply with the common bent of mankind, and give it all the improvements of which it is susceptible. Now, according to the most natural course of things, industry, and arts, and trade, increase the power of the sovereign, as well as the happiness of the subjects; and that policy is violent which aggrandizes the public by the poverty of individuals. This will easily appear from a few considerations, which will present to us the consequences of sloth and barbarity.

Where manufactures and mechanic arts are not cultivated, the bulk of the people must apply themselves to agriculture; and if their skill and industry increase, there must arise a great superfluity from their labour, beyond what suffices to maintain them. They have no temptation, therefore, to increase their skill and industry; since they cannot exchange that superfluity for any commodities which may serve either to their pleasure or vanity. A habit of indolence naturally prevails. The greater part of the land lies uncultivated. What is cultivated, yields not its utmost, for want of skill and assiduity in the farmers. If at any time the public exigencies require that great numbers should be employed in the public service, the labour of the people furnishes now no superfluities by which these numbers can be maintained. The labourers

cannot increase their skill and industry on a sudden. Lands uncultivated cannot be brought into tillage for some years. The armies, meanwhile, must either make sudden and violent conquests, or dieband for want of subsistence. A regular attack or defence, therefore, is not to be expected from such a people, and their soldiers must be as ignorant and unskilful as their farmers and manufacturers.

Every thing in the world is purchased by labour, and our passions are the only causes of labour. When a nation abounds in manufactures and mechanic arts, the proprietors of land, as well as the farmers, study agriculture as a science, and redouble their industry and attention. The superfluity which arises from their labour is not lost, but is exchanged with manufactures for those commodities which men's luxury now makes them covet. By this means, land furnishes a great deal more of the necessaries of life than what suffices for those who cultivate it. In times of peace and tranquillity, this superfluity goes to the maintenance of manufacturers, and the improvers of liberal arts. But it is easy for the public to convert many of these manufacturers into soldiers, and maintain them by that superfluity which arises from the labour of the farmers. Accordingly we find that this is the case in all civilized governments. When the sovereign raises an army, what is the consequence? He imposes a tax. This tax obliges all the people to retrench what is first necessary to their subsistence. Those who labour in such commodities must either enlist in the troops, or turn themselves to agriculture, and thereby oblige some labourers to enlist for want of business. And to consider the matter abstractedly, manufactures increase the power of the state only as they store up so much labour, and that of a kind to which the public may lay claim, without depriving any one

of the necessities of life. The more labour, therefore, that is employed beyond mere necessities, the more powerful is any state ; since the persons engaged in that labour may easily be converted to the public service. In a state without manufactures, there may be the same number of hands ; but there is not the same quantity of labour, nor of the same kind. All the labour is there bestowed upon necessities, which can admit of little or no abatement.

Thus the greatness of the sovereign, and the happiness of the state, are in a great measure united with regard to trade and manufactures. It is a violent method, and in most cases impracticable, to oblige the labourer to toil, in order to raise from the land more than what subsists himself and family. Furnish him with manufactures and commodities, and he will do it of himself ; afterwards you will find it easy to seize some part of his superfluous labour, and employ it in the public service, without giving him his wonted return. Being accustomed to industry, he will think this less grievous, than if at once you obliged him to an augmentation of labour without any reward. The case is the same with regard to the other members of the state. The greater is the stock of labour of all kinds, the greater quantity may be taken from the heap without making any sensible alteration in it.

A public granary of corn, a storehouse of cloth, a magazine of arms ; all these must be allowed real riches and strength in any state. Trade and industry are really nothing but a stock of labour, which, in times of peace and tranquillity, is employed for the ease and satisfaction of individuals, but in the exigencies of state, may in part be turned to public advantage. Could we convert a city into a kind of fortified camp, and infuse into each breast so martial a genius, and such a passion for public good, as to make every one willing to undergo the



that is, a greater number of laborious men are maintained, who may be diverted to the public service, without robbing any one of the necessities, or even the chief conveniences of life.

If we consult history, we shall find, that in most nations foreign trade has preceded any refinement in home manufactures, and given birth to domestic luxury. The temptation is stronger to make use of foreign commodities which are ready for use, and which are entirely new to us, than to make improvements on any domestic commodity, which always advance by slow degrees, and never affect us by their novelty. The profit is also very great in exporting what is superfluous at home, and what bears no price, to foreign nations whose soil or climate is not favourable to that commodity. Thus men become acquainted with the *pleasures* of luxury, and the *profits* of commerce; and their *delicacy* and *industry* being once awakened, carry them on to further improvements in every branch of domestic as well as foreign trade; and this perhaps is the chief advantage which arises from a commerce with strangers. It rouses men from their indolence; and, presenting the gayer and more opulent part of the nation with objects of luxury which they never before dreamed of, raises in them a desire of a more splendid way of life than what their ancestors enjoyed. And at the same time, the few merchants who possessed the secret of this importation and exportation, make great profits, and, becoming rivals in wealth to the ancient nobility, tempt other adventurers to become their rivals in commerce. Imitation soon diffuses all those arts, while domestic manufacturers emulate the foreign in their improvements, and work up every home commodity to the utmost perfection of which it is susceptible. Their own steel and iron, in such laborious hands, become equal to the gold and rubies of the Indies.



poor, and oppress them still further, to the discouragement of all industry.

In this circumstance consists the great advantage of England above any nation at present in the world, or that appears in the records of any story. It is true, the English feel some disadvantages in foreign trade by the high price of labour, which is in part the effect of the riches of their artisans, as well as of the plenty of money. But as foreign trade is not the most material circumstance, it is not to be put in competition with the happiness of so many millions; and if there were no more to endear to them that free government under which they live, this alone were sufficient. The poverty of the common people is a natural, if not an infallible effect of absolute monarchy; though I doubt whether it be always true on the other hand, that their riches are an infallible result of liberty. Liberty must be attended with particular accidents, and a certain turn of thinking, in order to produce that effect. Lord Bacon, accounting for the great advantages obtained by the English in their wars with France, ascribes them chiefly to the superior ease and plenty of the common people amongst the former; yet the government of the two kingdoms was, at that time, pretty much alike. Where the labourers and artisans are accustomed to work for low wages, and to retain but a small part of the fruits of their labour, it is difficult for them, even in a free government, to better their condition, or conspire among themselves to heighten their wages; but even where they are accustomed to a more plentiful way of life, it is easy for the rich, in an arbitrary government, to conspire against *them*, and throw the whole burden of the taxes on their shoulders.

It may seem an odd position, that the poverty of the common people in France, Italy, and Spain, is, in some measure, owing to the superior riches of the soil and happiness of climate; yet there want

no reasons to justify this paradox. In such a fine mould or soil as that of those more southern regions, agriculture is an easy art, and one man, with a couple of sorry horses, will be able, in a season, to cultivate as much land as will pay a pretty considerable rent to the proprietor. All the art which the farmer knows, is to leave his ground fallow for a year, as soon as it is exhausted, and the warmth of the sun alone and temperature of the climate enrich it, and restore its fertility. Such poor peasants therefore, require only a simple maintenance for their labour. They have no stock or riches which claim more, and at the same time they are for ever dependant on the landlord who gives no leases nor fears that his land will be spoiled by the ill methods of cultivation. In England, the land is rich, but coarse, must be cultivated at a great expence, and produces slender crops when not carefully managed, and by a method which gives not the full profit but in a course of several years. A farmer, therefore in England must have a considerable stock, and a long lease, which beget proportional profits. The vineyards of Champagne and Burgundy, that often yield to the landlord about five pounds per acre, are cultivated by peasants who have scarcely bread. The reason is, that peasants need no stock but their own limbs, with instruments of husbandry which they can buy for twenty shillings. The farmers are commonly in some better circumstances in those countries. But the graziers are most at their ease of all those who cultivate the land. The reason is still the same. Men must have profits proportionable to their expence and hazard. Where so considerable a number of the labouring poor, as the peasants and farmers, are in very low circumstances, all the rest must partake of their poverty, whether the government of that nation be monarchical or republican.

We may form a similar remark with regard to



the general history of mankind. What is the reason why no people living between the tropics, could ever yet attain to any art of civility, or reach even any police in their government, and any military discipline, while few nations in the temperate climates have been altogether deprived of these advantages? It is probable that one cause of this phenomenon is the warmth and equality of weather in the torrid zone, which render clothes and houses less requisite for the inhabitants, and thereby remove, in part, that necessity which is the great spur to industry and invention. *Curis acuens mortalia corda.* Not to mention, that the fewer goods or possessions of this kind any people enjoy, the fewer quarrels are likely to arise amongst them, and the less necessity will there be for a settled police or regular authority, to protect and defend them from foreign enemies, or from each other.

## ESSAY II

### OF REFINEMENT IN THE ARTS

Luxury is a word of an uncertain signification, and may be taken in a good as well as in a bad sense. In general it means great refinement in the gratification of the senses, and any degree of it may be innocent or blamable, according to the age, or country, or condition of the person. The bounds between the virtue and the vice cannot here be exactly fixed, more than in other moral subjects. I do imagine, that the gratifying of any sense, or the indulging of any delicacy in meat, drink, or apparel is of itself a vice, can never enter into a head, that is not disordered by the frenzies of enthusiasm. I have, indeed, heard of a monk abroad, who, because the windows of his cell opened upon a noble prospect, made a covenant with his eyes never to turn that way, or receive so sensual a gratification. And such is the crime of drinking Champagne or Burgundy, preferably to small beer or porter. These indulgences are only vices, when they are pursued at the expense of some virtue, as liberality or charity, in like manner as they are follies, when for them a man ruins his fortune, and reduces himself to want and beggary. Where they entrench upon no virtue, but leave ample subject whence to provide for friends, family, and every proper object of generosity or compassion, they are entirely innocent, and have in every age been acknowledged such by almost all moralists. To be entirely

occupied with the luxury of the table, for instance, without any relish for the pleasures of ambition, study, or conversation, is a mark of stupidity, and is incompatible with any vigour of temper or genius. To confine one's expense entirely to such a gratification, without regard to friends or family, is an indication of a heart destitute of humanity or benevolence. But if a man reserve time sufficient for all laudable pursuits, and money sufficient for all generous purposes, he is free from every shadow of blame or reproach.

Since luxury may be considered either as innocent or blamable, one may be surprised at those preposterous opinions which have been entertained concerning it; while men of libertine principles bestow praises even on vicious luxury, and represent it as highly advantageous to society; and, on the other hand, men of severe morals blame even the most innocent luxury, and represent it as the source of all the corruptions, disorders, and factions incident to civil government. We shall here endeavour to correct both these extremes, by proving, *first*, that the ages of refinement are both the happiest and most virtuous; *secondly*, that wherever luxury ceases to be innocent, it also ceases to be beneficial; and when carried a degree too far, is a quality pernicious, though perhaps not the most pernicious, to political society.

To prove the first point, we need but consider the effects of refinement both on *private* and on *public* life. Human happiness, according to the most received notions, seems to consist in three ingredients: action, pleasure, and indolence; and though these ingredients ought to be mixed in different proportions, according to the particular disposition of the person; yet no one ingredient can be entirely wanting, without destroying, in some measure, the relish of the whole composition. Indolence or repose, indeed, seems not of itself to

contribute much to our enjoyment: but, like sleep, is requisite as an antidote, to the weakness of human nature, which cannot support an uninterrupted course of business or pleasure. That quick march of the spirits, which takes a man from himself, and chiefly gives satisfaction, does in the end exhaust the mind, and requires some intervals of repose, which, though agreeable for a moment, yet, if prolonged, beget a languor and lethargy, that destroy all enjoyment. Education, custom, and example, have a mighty influence in turning the mind to any of these pursuits, and it must be owned that, where they promote a relish for action and pleasure, they are so far favourable to human happiness. In times when industry and the arts flourish, men are kept in perpetual occupation, and enjoy, as their reward, the occupation itself, as well as those pleasures which are the fruit of their labour. The mind acquires new vigour; enlarges its powers and faculties, and, by an assiduity in honest industry, both satisfies its natural appetites, and prevents the growth of unnatural ones, which commonly spring up, when nourished by ease and idleness. Banish those arts from society, you deprive men both of action and of pleasure; and, leaving nothing but indolence in their place, you even destroy the relish of indolence, which never is agreeable, but when it succeeds to labour, and recruits the spirits, exhausted by too much application and fatigue.

Another advantage of industry and of refinements in the mechanical arts, is, that they commonly produce some refinements in the liberal; nor can one be carried to perfection, without being accompanied, in some degree, with the other. The same age which produces great philosophers and politicians, renowned generals and poets, usually abounds with skilful weavers, and ship-carpenters. We cannot reasonably expect, that a piece of

woollen cloth will be wrought to perfection in a nation which is ignorant of astronomy, or where ethics are neglected. The spirit of the age affects all the arts, and the minds of men being once roused from their lethargy, and put into a fermentation, turn themselves on all sides, and carry improvements into every art and science. Profound ignorance is totally banished, and men enjoy the privilege of rational creatures, to think as well as to act, to cultivate the pleasures of the mind as well as those of the body.

The more these refined arts advance, the more sociable men become : nor is it possible, that, when enriched with science, and possessed of a fund of conversation, they should be contented to remain in solitude, or live with their fellow-citizens in that distant manner, which is peculiar to ignorant and barbarous nations. They flock into cities ; love to receive and communicate knowledge ; to show their wit or their breeding ; their taste in conversation or living, in clothes or furniture. Curiosity allures the wise ; vanity the foolish ; and pleasure both. Particular clubs and societies are everywhere formed : both sexes meet in an easy and sociable manner ; and the tempers of men, as well as their behaviour, refine apace. So that, beside the improvements which they receive from knowledge and the liberal arts, it is impossible but they must feel an increase of humanity, from the very habit of conversing together, and contributing to each other's pleasure and entertainment. Thus *industry*, *knowledge*, and *humanity*, are linked together, by an indissoluble chain, and are found, from experience as well as reason, to be peculiar to the more polished, and, what are commonly denominated, the more luxurious ages.

Nor are these advantages attended with disadvantages that bear any proportion to them. The more men refine upon pleasure, the less will they indulge in excesses of any kind ; because nothing

is more destructive to true pleasure than such excesses. One may as well affirm, that the Tartars are oftener guilty of beastly gluttony, when they feast on their dead horses, than European courtiers with all their refinement of cookery. And if libertine love, or even infidelity to the marriage-bed, be more frequent in polite ages, when it is often regarded only as a piece of gallantry; drunkenness, on the other hand, is much less common, a vice more odious, and more pernicious, both to mind and body. And in this matter I would appeal, not only to an Ovid or a Petronius, but to a Seneca or a Cato. We know that Cæsar, during Catiline's conspiracy, being necessitated to put into Cato's hands a *bell-dour*, which discovered an intrigue with Servilia, Cato's own sister, that stern philosopher threw it back to him with indignation, and, in the bitterness of his wrath, gave him the appellation of drunkard, as a term more opprobrious than that with which he could more justly have reproached him.

{ But industry, knowledge, and humanity, are not advantageous in private life alone, they diffuse their beneficial influence on the public, and render the government as great and flourishing as they make individuals happy and prosperous. The increase and consumption of all the commodities, which serve to the ornament and pleasure of life, are advantages to society, because, at the same time that they multiply those innocent gratifications to individuals, they are a kind of *storehouse* of labour, which, in the exigencies of state, may be turned to the public service. In a nation where there is no demand for such superfluities, men sink into indolence, lose all enjoyment of life, and are useless to the public, which cannot maintain or support its fleets and armies from the industry of such slothful members. }

The bounds of all the European kingdoms are, at

present, nearly the same they were two hundred years ago. But what a difference is there in the power and grandeur of those kingdoms? which can be ascribed to nothing but the increase of art and industry. When Charles VIII. of France invaded Italy, he carried with him about 20,000 men; yet this armament so exhausted the nation, as we learn from Guicciardin, that for some years it was not able to make so great an effort. The late king of France, in time of war, kept in pay above 400,000 men; though from Mazarine's death to his own, he was engaged in a course of wars that lasted near thirty years.

This industry is much promoted by the knowledge inseparable from ages of art and refinement; as, on the other hand, this knowledge enables the public to make the best advantage of the industry of its subjects. Laws, order, police, discipline; these can never be carried to any degree of perfection, before human reason has refined itself by exercise, and by an application to the more vulgar arts, at least of commerce and manufacture. Can we expect that a government will be well modelled by a people, who know not how to make a spinning wheel, or to employ a loom to advantage? Not to mention, that all ignorant ages are infested with superstition, which throws the government off its bias, and disturbs men in the pursuit of their interest and happiness. Knowledge in the arts of government begets mildness and moderation, by instructing men in the advantages of humane maxims above rigour and severity, which drive subjects into rebellion, and make the return to submission impracticable, by cutting off all hopes of pardon. When the tempers of men are softened as well as their knowledge improved, this humanity appears still more conspicuous, and is the chief characteristic which distinguishes a civilized age from times of barbarity and ignorance. Factions are then less inveterate,

revolutions less tragical, authority less severe, and seditions less frequent. Even foreign wars shake of their cruelty, and after the field of battle, where honour and interest steel men against compassion, as well as fear, the combatants divest themselves of the brute, and resume the man.)

Nor need we fear, that men, by losing their ferocity, will lose their martial spirit, or become less undaunted and vigorous in defence of their country or their liberty. The arts have no such effect in enervating either the mind or body. On the contrary, industry, their inseparable attendant, adds new force to both. And if anger, which is said to be the whetstone of courage, loses somewhat of its asperity, by politeness and refinement, a sense of honour, which is a stronger, more constant, and more governable principle, acquires fresh vigour by that elevation of genius which arises from knowledge and a good education. Add to this, that courage can neither have any duration, nor be of any use, when not accompanied with discipline and martial skill, which are seldom found among a barbarous people. The ancients remarked, that Datames was the only barbarian that ever knew the art of war. And Pyrrhus, seeing the Romans marshal their army with some art and skill, said with surprise, *These barbarians have nothing barbarous in their discipline!* It is observable, that, as the old Romans, by applying themselves solely to war, were almost the only uncivilized people that ever possessed military discipline, so the modern Italians are the only civilized people, among Europeans, that ever wanted courage and a martial spirit. Those who would ascribe this effeminacy of the Italians to their luxury, or politeness, or application to the arts, need but consider the French and English, whose bravery is as incontestable as their love for the arts, and their assiduity in commerce. The Italian historians give us a more satisfactory



reason for the degeneracy of their countrymen. They show us how the sword was dropped at once by all the Italian sovereigns ; while the Venetian aristocracy was jealous of its subjects, the Florentine democracy applied itself entirely to commerce ; Rome was governed by priests, and Naples by women. War then became the business of soldiers of fortune, who spared one another, and, to the astonishment of the world, could engage a whole day in what they called a battle, and return at night to their camp without the least bloodshed.

What has chiefly induced severe moralists to declaim against refinement in the arts, is the example of ancient Rome, which, joining to its poverty and rusticity virtue and public spirit, rose to such a surprising height of grandeur and liberty ; but, having learned from its conquered provinces the Asiatic luxury, fell into every kind of corruption ; whence arose sedition and civil wars, attended at last with the total loss of liberty. All the Latin classics, whom we peruse in our infancy, are full of these sentiments, and universally ascribe the ruin of their state to the arts and riches imported from the East ; insomuch, that Sallust represents a taste for painting as a vice, no less than lewdness and drinking. And so popular were these sentiments, during the latter ages of the republic, that this author abounds in praises of the old rigid Roman virtue, though himself the most egregious instance of modern luxury and corruption ; speaks contemptuously of the Grecian eloquence, though the most elegant writer in the world ; nay, employs preposterous digressions and declamations to this purpose, though a model of taste and correctness.

But it would be easy to prove, that these writers mistook the cause of the disorders in the Roman state, and ascribed to luxury and the arts, what really proceeded from an ill-modelled government, and the unlimited extent of conquests. Refinement

on the pleasures and conveniences of life has no natural tendency to beget venality and corruption. The value which all men put upon any particular pleasure, depends on comparison and experience, nor is a porter less greedy of money, which he spends on lace and brandy, than a courtier, who purchases champagne and ortolans. Riches are valuable at all times, and to all men, because they always purchase pleasures, such as men are accustomed to and desire: nor can any thing restrain or regulate the love of money, but a sense of honour and virtue, which, if it be not nearly equal at all times, will naturally abound most in ages of knowledge and refinement.

Of all European kingdoms Poland seems the most defective in the arts of war as well as peace, mechanical as well as liberal, yet it is there that venality and corruption do most prevail. The nobles seem to have preserved their crown elective for no other purpose, than regularly to sell it to the highest bidder. This is almost the only species of commerce with which that people are acquainted.

The liberties of England, so far from decaying since the improvements in the arts, have never flourished so much as during that period. And though corruption may seem to increase of late years, this is chiefly to be ascribed to our established liberty, when our princes have found the impossibility of governing without parliaments, or of terrifying parliaments by the phantom of prerogative. Not to mention, that this corruption or venality prevails much more among the electors than the elected, and therefore cannot justly be ascribed to any refinements in luxury.

If we consider the matter in a proper light, we shall find, that a progress in the arts is rather favourable to liberty, and has a natural tendency to preserve, if not produce a free government. In rude unpolished nations, where the arts are

neglected, all labour is bestowed on the cultivation of the ground; and the whole society is divided into two classes, proprietors of land, and their vassals or tenants. The latter are necessarily dependent, and fitted for slavery and subjection; especially where they possess no riches, and are not valued for their knowledge in agriculture; as must always be the case where the arts are neglected. The former naturally erect themselves into petty tyrants; and must either submit to an absolute master, for the sake of peace and order; or, if they will preserve their independency, like the ancient barons, they must fall into feuds and contests among themselves, and throw the whole society into such confusion, as is perhaps worse than the most despotic government. But where luxury nourishes commerce and industry, the peasants, by a proper cultivation of the land, become rich and independent: while the tradesmen and merchants acquire a share of the property, and draw authority and consideration to that middling rank of men, who are the best and firmest basis of public liberty. These submit not to slavery, like the peasants, from poverty and meanness of spirit; and, having no hopes of tyrannizing over others, like the barons, they are not tempted, for the sake of that gratification, to submit to the tyranny of their sovereign. They covet equal laws, which may secure their property, and preserve them from monarchical, as well as aristocratical tyranny.

The lower house is the support of our popular government; and all the world acknowledges, that it owed its chief influence and consideration to the increase of commerce, which threw such a balance of property into the hands of the Commons. How inconsistent, then, is it to blame so violently a refinement in the arts, and to represent it as the bane of liberty and public spirit!

To declaim against present times, and magnify the virtue of remote ancestors, is a propensity almost inherent in human nature and as the sentiments and opinions of civilized ages alone are transmitted to posterity, hence it is that we meet with so many severe judgments pronounced against luxury, and even science, and hence it is that at present we give so ready an assent to them. But the fallacy is easily perceived, by comparing different nations that are contemporaries, where we both judge more impartially, and can better set in opposition those manners, with which we are sufficiently acquainted. Treachery and cruelty, the most pernicious and most odious of all vices, seem peculiar to uncivilized ages, and, by the refined Greeks and Romans, were ascribed to all the barbarous nations which surrounded them. They might justly, therefore, have presumed, that their own ancestors, so highly celebrated, possessed no greater virtue, and were as much inferior to their posterity in honour and humanity, as in taste and science. An ancient Frank or Saxon may be highly extolled but I believe every man would think his life or fortune much less secure in the hands of a Moor or Tartar, than in those of a French or English gentleman, the rank of men the most civilized in the most civilized nations.

We come now to the *second* position which we proposed to illustrate, to wit, that, as innocent luxury, or a refinement in the arts and conveniences of life, is advantageous to the public, so, wherever luxury ceases to be innocent, it also ceases to be beneficial, and when carried a degree further, begins to be a quality pernicious, though perhaps not the most pernicious, to political society.

Let us consider what we call vicious luxury. No gratification, however sensual, can of itself be esteemed vicious. A gratification is only vicious when it engrosses all a man's expense, and leaves

no ability for such acts of duty and generosity as are required by his situation and fortune. Suppose that he correct the vice, and employ part of his expense in the education of his children, in the support of his friends, and in relieving the poor; would any prejudice result to society? On the contrary, the same consumption would arise; and that labour, which at present is employed only in producing a slender gratification to one man, would relieve the necessitous, and bestow satisfaction on hundreds. The same care and toil that raise a dish of peas at Christmas, would give bread to a whole family, during six months. To say that, without a vicious luxury, the labour would not have been employed at all, is only to say, that there is some other defect in human nature, such as indolence, selfishness, inattention to others, for which luxury, in some measure, provides a remedy; as one poison may be an antidote to another. But virtue, like wholesome food, is better than poisons, however corrected.

without curing sloth and an indifference to others, you only diminish industry in the state, and add nothing to men's charity or their generosity. Let us, therefore, rest contented with asserting, that two opposite vices in a state may be more advantageous than either of them alone, but let us never pronounce vice in itself advantageous. It is not very inconsistent for an author to assert in one page, that moral distinctions are inventions of politicians for public interest, and in the next page maintain, that vice is advantageous to the public.<sup>1</sup> And indeed it seems, upon any system of morality, little less than a contradiction in terms, to talk of a vice which is in general beneficial to society.

I thought this reasoning necessary, in order to give some light to a philosophical question, which has been much disputed in England. I call it a *philosophical* question, not a *political* one. For whatever may be the consequence of such a miraculous transformation of mankind, as would endow them with every species of virtue, and free them from every species of vice, this concerns not the magistrate, who must only of possibilities. He cannot cure every vice by substituting a virtue in its place. Very often he can only cure one vice by another, and in that case he ought to prefer what is least pernicious to society. Luxury, when excessive, is the source of many ills, but is in general

<sup>1</sup> Fable of the Bees

<sup>2</sup> Prodigality is not to be confounded with a refinement in the arts. It even appears that that vice is much less frequent in the cultivated ages. Industry and gain beget this frugality among the lower and middle ranks of men and in all the busy professions. Men of high rank, indeed, it may be pretended are more allured by the pleasures which become more frequent, but idleness is the great source of prodigality at all times and there are pleasures and vanities in every age which allure men equally when they are unacquainted with better enjoyments not to mention that the high interest paid in rude times quickly consumes the fortunes of the landed gentry, and multiplies their necessities.

preferable to sloth and idleness, which would commonly succeed in its place, and are more hurtful both to private persons and to the public. When sloth reigns, a mean uncultivated way of life prevails amongst individuals, without society, without enjoyment. And if the sovereign, in such a situation, demands the service of his subjects, the labour of the state suffices only to furnish the necessaries of life to the labourers, and can afford nothing to those who are employed in the public service.

## ESSAY III

### OF MONEY

MONEY is not, properly speaking, one of the subjects of commerce, but only the instrument which men have agreed upon to facilitate the exchange of one commodity for another. It is none of the wheels of trade—it is the oil which renders the motion of the wheels more smooth and easy. If we consider any one kingdom by itself, it is evident that the greater or less plenty of money is of no consequence, since the prices of commodities are always proportioned to the plenty of money, and a crown in Henry VII's time served the same purpose as a pound does at present. It is only the public which draws any advantage from the greater plenty of money, and that only in its wars and negotiations with foreign states. And this is the reason why all rich and trading countries, from Carthage to Great Britain and Holland, have employed mercenary troops, which they lured from their poorer neighbours. Were they to make use of their native subjects, they would find less advantage from their superior riches, and from their great plenty of gold and silver, since the pay of all their servants must rise in proportion to the public opulence. Our small army of 20,000 men is maintained at as great expense as a French army twice as numerous. The English fleet, during the late war, required as much money to support it as all the Roman legions, which



kept the whole world in subjection, during the time of the emperors.<sup>1</sup>

The great number of people, and their greater industry, are serviceable in all cases, at home and abroad, in private and in public. But the greater plenty of money is very limited in its use, and may even sometimes be a loss to a nation in its commerce with foreigners.

There seems to be a happy concurrence of causes in human affairs, which checks the growth of trade and riches, and hinders them from being confined entirely to one people, as might naturally at first be dreaded from the advantages of an established commerce. Where one nation has gotten the start of another in trade, it is very difficult for the latter to regain the ground it has lost, because of the superior industry and skill of the former, and the greater stocks of which its merchants are possessed,

<sup>1</sup> A private soldier in the Roman infantry had a denarius a day, somewhat less than eighteen pence. The Roman emperors had commonly 25 legions in pay, which, allowing 5,000 men to a legion, makes 125,000, *Tacit. Ann. lib. iv.* It is true there were also auxiliaries to the legions; but their numbers are uncertain as well as their pay. To consider only the legionaries, the pay of the private men could not exceed 1,600,000 pounds. Now, the parliament in the last war commonly allowed for the fleet 2,500,000. We have therefore 900,000 over for the officers and other expenses of the Roman legions. There seem to have been but few officers in the Roman armies in comparison of what are employed in all our modern troops, except some Swiss corps. And these officers had very small pay: a centurion, for instance, only double a common soldier. And as the soldiers from their pay (*Tacit. Ann. lib. i.*) bought their own clothes, arms, tents, and baggage; this must also diminish considerably the other charges of the army. So little expensive was that mighty government, and so easy was its yoke over the world! And, indeed, this is the more natural conclusion from the foregoing calculations. For money, after the conquest of Egypt, seems to have been nearly in as great plenty at Rome as it is at present in the richest of the European kingdoms.

and which enable them to trade on so much smaller profits. But these advantages are compensated, in some measure, by the low price of labour in every nation which has not an extensive commerce, and does not much abound in gold and silver. Manufactures, therefore, gradually shift their places, leaving those countries and provinces which they have already enriched, and flying to others, whither they are allured by the cheapness of provisions and labour, till they have enriched these also, and are again banished by the same causes. And in general we may observe, that the dearthness of every thing, from plenty of money, is a disadvantage which attends an established commerce, and sets bounds to it in every country, by enabling the poorer states to undersell the richer in all foreign markets.

This has made no entertain a doubt concerning the benefit of *banks* and *paper-credit*, which are so generally esteemed advantageous to every nation. That provisions and labour should become dear by the increase of trade and money, is, in many respects, an inconvenience, but an inconvenience that is unavoidable, and the effect of that public wealth and prosperity which are the end of all our wishes. It is compensated by the advantages which we reap from the possession of these precious metals, and the weight which they give the nation in all foreign wars and negotiations. But there appears no reason for increasing that inconvenience by a counterfeit money, which foreigners will not accept of in any payment, and which any great disorder in the state will reduce to nothing. There are, it is true, many people in every rich state, who, having large sums of money, would prefer paper, with good security; as being of more easy transport and more safe custody. If the public provide not a bank, private bankers will take advantage of this circumstance, as the goldsmiths formerly did in London, or as the bankers do at present in Dublin and therefore it

is better, it may be thought, that a public company should enjoy the benefit of that paper-credit, which always will have place in every opulent kingdom. But to endeavour artificially to increase such a credit, can never be the interest of any trading nation ; but must lay them under disadvantages, by increasing money beyond its natural proportion to labour and commodities, and thereby heightening their price to the merchant and manufacturer. And in this view, it must be allowed, that no bank could be more advantageous than such a one as locked up all the money it received,<sup>1</sup> and never augmented the circulating coin, as is usual by returning part of its treasure into commerce. A public bank, by this expedient, might cut off much of the dealings of private bankers and money-jobbers : and though the state bore the charge of salaries to the directors and tellers of this bank, (for, according to the preceding supposition, it would have no profit from its dealings,) the national advantage, resulting from the low price of labour and the destruction of paper-credit, would be a sufficient compensation. Not to mention, that so large a sum, lying ready at command, would be a convenience in times of great public danger and distress ; and what part of it was used might be replaced at leisure, when peace and tranquillity was restored to the nation.

But of this subject of paper-credit we shall treat more largely hereafter. And I shall finish this Essay on Money, by proposing and explaining two observations, which may perhaps serve to employ the thoughts of our speculative politicians.

It was a shrewd observation of Anacharsis the Scythian, who had never seen money in his own country, that gold and silver seemed to him of no use to the Greeks, but to assist them in numeration and arithmetic. It is indeed evident, that money is nothing but the representation of labour and

<sup>1</sup> This is the case with the bank of Amsterdam.

commodities, and serves only as a method of rating or estimating them. Where corn is in greater plenty, as a greater quantity of it is required to represent the same quantity of goods; it can have no effect, either good or bad, taking a nation within itself; any more than it would make an alteration on a merchant's books, if, instead of the Arabian method of notation, which requires few characters, he should make use of the Roman, which requires a great many. Nay, the greater quantity of money, like the Roman characters, is rather inconvenient, and requires greater trouble both to keep and transport it. But, notwithstanding this conclusion, which must be allowed just, it is certain, that, since the discovery of the mines in America, industry has increased in all the nations of Europe, except in the possessors of those mines, and this may justly be ascribed, amongst other reasons, to the increase of gold and silver. Accordingly we find, that, in every kingdom, into which money begins to flow in greater abundance than formerly, every thing takes a new face. Labour and industry gain life, the merchant becomes more enterprising, the manufacturer more diligent and skilful, and even the farmer follows his plough with greater alacrity and attention. This is not easily to be accounted for, if we consider only the influence which a greater abundance of coin has in the kingdom itself, by heightening the price of commodities, and obliging every one to pay a greater number of these little yellow or white pieces for every thing he purchases. And as to foreign trade, it appears, that great plenty of money is rather disadvantageous, by raising the price of every kind of labour.

To account, then, for this phenomenon, we must consider, that though the high price of commodities be a necessary consequence of the increase of gold and silver, yet it follows not immediately upon that increase, but some time is required before the money

circulates through the whole state, and makes its effect be felt on all ranks of people. At first, no alteration is perceived; by degrees the price rises, first of one commodity, then of another; till the whole at last reaches a just proportion with the new quantity of specie which is in the kingdom. In my opinion, it is only in this interval or intermediate situation, between the acquisition of money and rise of prices, that the increasing quantity of gold and silver is favourable to industry. When any quantity of money is imported into a nation, it is not at first dispersed into many hands; but is confined to the coffers of a few persons, who immediately seek to employ it to advantage. Here are a set of manufacturers or merchants, we shall suppose, who have received returns of gold and silver for goods which they sent to Cadiz. They are thereby enabled to employ more workmen than formerly, who never dream of demanding higher wages, but are glad of employment from such good paymasters. If workmen become scarce, the manufacturer gives higher wages, but at first requires an increase of labour; and this is willingly submitted to by the artisan, who can now eat and drink better, to compensate his additional toil and fatigue. He carries his money to market, where he finds every thing at the same price as formerly, but returns with greater quantity, and of better kinds, for the use of his family. The farmer and gardener, finding that all their commodities are taken off, apply themselves with alacrity to the raising more; and at the same time can afford to take better and more clothes from their tradesmen, whose price is the same as formerly, and their industry only whetted by so much new gain. It is easy to trace the money in its progress through the whole commonwealth; where we shall find, that it must first quicken the diligence of every individual, before it increase the price of labour.

And that the specie may increase to a considerable pitch, before it has this latter effect, appears, amongst other instances, from the frequent operations of the French king on the money; where it was always found, that the augmenting of the nummery value did not produce a proportional rise of the prices, at least for some time. In the last year of Louis XIV. money was raised three sevenths, but prices augmented only one. Corn in France is now sold at the same price, or for the same number of livres, it was in 1683; though silver was then at 30 livres the mark, and is now at 50<sup>1</sup>. Not to mention the great addition of gold and silver which may have come into that kingdom since that period.

<sup>1</sup> These facts I give upon the authority of M. du Tot in his *Reflections Politiques*, an author of reputation; though I must confess, that the facts which he advances on other occasions, are often so suspicious, as to make his authority less in this matter. However, the general observation, that the augmenting of the money in France does not at first proportionably augment the prices, is certainly just.

By the by, this seems to be one of the best reasons which can be given, for a gradual and universal increase of the denomination of money, though it has been entirely overlooked in all those volumes which have been written on that question by Melon du Tot, and Paria de Verney. Were all our money, for instance, recoinced, and a penny's worth of silver taken from every shilling, the new shilling would probably purchase every thing that could have been bought by the old, the prices of every thing would thereby be insensibly diminished, foreign trade enlivened and domestic industry, by the circulation of a great number of pounds and shillings, would receive some increase and encouragement. In executing such a project, it would be better to make the new shilling pass for 24 half pence in order to preserve the illusion, and to make it be taken for the same. And as a recoinage of our silver begins to be requisite, by the continual wearing of our shillings and sixpences, it may be doubtful, whether we ought to imitate the example in King William's reign, when the clipped money was raised to the old standard.

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And that the specie may increase to a considerable pitch, before it have this latter effect, appears, amongst other instances, from the frequent operations of the French king on the money; where it was always found, that the augmenting of the numerary value did not produce a proportional rise of the prices, at least for some time. In the last year of Louis XIV. money was raised three sevenths, but prices augmented only one. Corn in France is now sold at the same price, or for the same number of livres, it was in 1643; though silver was then at 30 livres the mark, and is now at 50.<sup>1</sup> Not to mention the great addition of gold and silver which may have come into that kingdom since that period.

<sup>1</sup> These facts I give upon the authority of M. de Tot, in his *Reflections Politiques*, an author of reputation; though I must confess, that the facts which he advances on other occasions, are often so suspicious, as to make his authority less in this matter. However, the general observation, that the augmenting of the money in France does not at first proportionably augment the prices, is certainly just.

By the by, this seems to be one of the best reasons which can be given, for a gradual and universal increase of the denomination of money, though it has been entirely overlooked in all those volumes which have been written on that question by Melon du Tot, and Paris de Verney. Were all our money, for instance, re coined, and a penny's worth of silver taken from every shilling, the new shilling would probably purchase every thing that could have been bought by the old, the prices of every thing would thereby be insensibly diminished, foreign trade enlivened; and domestic industry, by the circulation of a great number of pounds and shillings, would receive some increase and encouragement. In executing such a project, it would be better to make the new shilling pass for 21 half pence in order to reserve the illusion, and to make it be taken for the same. And as a recoinage of our silver begins to be requisite, by the continual wearing of our shillings and sixpences, it may be doubtful, whether we ought to imitate the example in King William's reign, when the clipp'd money was raised to the old standard.



From the whole of this reasoning we may conclude, that it is of no manner of consequence with regard to the domestic happiness of a state, whether money be in a greater or less quantity. The good policy of the magistrate consists only in keeping it, if possible, still increasing; because by that means he keeps alive a spirit of industry in the nation, and increases the stock of labour in which consists all real power and riches. A nation, whose money decreases, is actually at that time weaker and more miserable than another nation which possesses no more money, but is on the increasing hand. This will be easily accounted for, if we consider that the alterations in the quantity of money, either on one side or the other, are not immediately attended with proportionable alterations in the price of commodities. There is always an interval before matters be adjusted to their new situation; and this interval is as pernicious to industry, when gold and silver are diminishing, as it is advantageous when these metals are increasing. The workman has not the same employment from the manufacturer and merchant; though he pays the same price for every thing in the market. The farmer cannot dispose of his corn and cattle, though he must pay the same rent to his landlord. The poverty and beggary, and sloth, which must ensue, are easily foreseen.

II. The second observation which I proposed to make with regard to money, may be explained after the following manner: There are some kingdoms, and many provinces in Europe, (and all of them were once in the same condition,) where money is so scarce, that the landlord can get none at all from his tenants, but is obliged to take his rent in kind, and either to consume it himself, or transport it to places where he may find a market. In those countries, the prince can levy few or no taxes but in the same manner; and as he will receive small benefit from impositions so paid, it is evident that

such a kingdom has little force even at home, and cannot maintain fleets and armies to the same extent as if every part of it abounded in gold and silver. There is surely a greater disproportion between the force of Germany at present, and what it was three centuries ago,<sup>1</sup> than there is in its industry, people, and manufactures. The Austrian dominions in the empire are in general well peopled and well cultivated, and are of great extent, but have not a proportionable weight in the balance of Europe, proceeding as is commonly supposed, from the scarcity of money. How do all these facts agree with that principle of reason, that the quantity of gold and silver is in itself altogether indifferent? According to that principle, wherever a sovereign has numbers of subjects, and these have plenty of commodities, he should of course be great and powerful, and they rich and happy, independent of the greater or lesser abundance of the precious metals. These admit of divisions and subdivisions to a great extent, and where the pieces might become so small as to be in danger of being lost, it is easy to mix the gold or silver with a baser metal, as is practised in some countries of Europe, and by that means raise the pieces to a bulk more sensible and convenient. They still serve the same purposes of exchange, whatever their number may be, or whatever colour they may be supposed to have.

To these difficulties I answer, that the effect here supposed to flow from scarcity of money, really arises from the manners and customs of the people, and that we mistake, as is too usual, a collateral effect for a cause. The contradiction is only apparent, but it requires some thought and reflection to discover the principles by which we can reconcile *reason to experience*.

<sup>1</sup> The Italians gave to the emperor Maximilian the nick name of *POUR LE DAVANT*. None of the enterprises of that prince ever succeeded, for want of money.



the neighbourhood, is content to receive his rent in the commodities raised by the farmer. The greater part of these he consumes at home, in rustic hospitality. The rest, perhaps, he disposes of for money to the neighbouring town, whence he draws the few materials of his expense and luxury.

But after men begin to refine on all these enjoyments, and live not always at home, nor are content with what can be raised in their neighbourhood, there is more exchange and commerce of all kinds, and more money enters into that exchange. The tradesmen will not be paid in corn, because they want something more than barley to eat. The farmer goes beyond his own parish for the commodities he purchases, and cannot always carry his commodities to the merchant who supplies him. The landlord lives in the capital, or in a foreign country, and demands his rent in gold and silver, which can easily be transported to him. Great undertakers, and manufacturers, and merchants arise in every commodity, and these can conveniently deal in nothing but in specie. And consequently, in this situation of society, the coin enters into many more contracts, and by that means is much more employed than in the former.

The necessary effect is, that, provided the money increase not in the nation every thing must become much cheaper in times of industry and refinement, than in rude uncultivated ages. It is the proportion between the circulating money, and the commodities in the market, which determines the prices. Goods that are consumed at home, or exchanged with other goods in the neighbourhood, never come to market, they effect not in the least the current specie, with regard to it, they are as if totally annihilated, and consequently this method of using them sinks the proportion on the sale of the commodities, and increases the prices. But after money enters into all contracts and sales, and is

everywhere the measure of exchange, the same national cash has a much greater task to perform ; all commodities are then in the market ; the sphere of circulation is enlarged ; it is the same case as if that individual sum were to serve a larger kingdom ; and therefore, the proportion being here lessened on the side of the money, every thing must become cheaper, and the prices gradually fall.

By the most exact computations that have been formed all over Europe, after making allowance for the alteration in the numcrary value or the denomination, it is found, that the prices of all things have only risen threc, or, at most, four times since the discovery of the West Indies. But will any one assert, that there is not much more than four times the coin in Europe that was in the fifteenth century, and the centuries preccding it ? The Spaniards and Portuguese from their mines, the English, French, and Dutch, by their African trade, and by their interlopers in the West Indies, bring home about six millions a year, of which not above a third goes to the East Indies. This sum alone, in ten years, would probably double the ancient stock of money in Europe. And no other satisfactory reason can be given why all prices have not risen to a much more exorbitant height, except that which is derived from a change of customs and manners. Besides that more commodities are produced by additional industry, the same commodities come more to market, after men depart from their ancient simplicity of manners. And though this increase has not been equal to that of money, it has, however, been considerable, and has preserved the proportion between coin and commodities nearer the ancient standard.

Were the question proposed, Which of these methods of living in the people, the simple or refined, is the most advantageous to the state or public ? I should, without much scruple, prefer the

latter, in a view to politics at least, and should produce this as an additional reason for the encouragement of trade and manufactures.

While men live in the ancient simple manner, and supply all their necessities from domestic industry, or from the neighbourhood, the sovereign can levy no taxes in money from a considerable part of his subjects, and if he will impose on them any burdens, he must take payment in commodities with which alone they abound, a method attended with such great and obvious inconveniences, that they need not here be insisted on. All the money he can pretend to raise must be from his principal cities, where alone it circulates, and these, it is evident, cannot afford him so much as the whole state could, did gold and silver circulate throughout the whole. But besides this obvious diminution of the revenue there is another cause of the poverty of the public in such a situation. Not only the sovereign receives less money, but the same money goes not so far as in times of industry and general commerce. Every thing is dearer where the gold and silver are supposed equal, and that because fewer commodities come to market, and the whole coin bears a higher proportion to what is to be purchased by it, whence alone the prices of every thing are fixed and determined.

Here then we may learn the fallacy of the remark, often to be met with in historians, and even in common conversation, that any particular state is weak, though fertile, populous, and well cultivated, merely because it wants money. It appears, that the want of money can never injure any state within itself, for men and commodities are the real strength of any community. It is the simple manner of living which here hurts the public, by confining the gold and silver to few hands, and preventing its universal diffusion and circulation. On the contrary, industry and refinements of all kinds incorporate



## ESSAY IV OF INTEREST

NOTHING is esteemed a more certain sign of the flourishing condition of any nation than the lowness of interest and with reason, though I believe the cause is somewhat different from what is commonly apprehended. Lowness of interest is generally ascribed to plenty of money. But money, however plentiful, has no other effect, *if fixed*, than to raise the price of labour. Silver is more common than gold, and therefore you receive a greater quantity of it for the same commodities. But do you pay less interest for it? Interest in Batavia and Jamaica is at 10 per cent, in Portugal at 6, though these places, as we may learn from the prices of every thing, abound more in gold and silver than either London or Amsterdam.

Were all the gold in England annihilated at once, and one and twenty shillings substituted in the place of every guinea, would money be more plentiful, or interest lower? No, surely we should only use silver, instead of gold. Were gold rendered as common as silver, and silver as common as copper, would money be more plentiful, or interest lower? We may assuredly give the same answer. Our shillings would then be yellow, and our half-pence white, and we should have no guineas. No other difference would ever be observed, no alteration on commerce, manufactures navigation or interest, unless we imagine that the colour of the metal is of any consequence.



Now, what is so visible in these greater variations of scarcity or abundance in the precious metals, must hold in all inferior changes. If the multiplying of gold and silver fifteen times makes no difference, much less can the doubling or tripling them. All augmentation has no other effect than to heighten the price of labour and commodities; and even this variation is little more than that of a name. In the progress towards these changes, the augmentation may have some influence, by exciting industry; but after the prices are settled, suitably to the new abundance of gold and silver, it has no manner of influence.

An effect always holds proportion with its cause. Prices have risen near four times since the discovery of the Indies; and it is probable gold and silver have multiplied much more: but interest has not fallen much above half. The rate of interest, therefore, is not derived from the quantity of the precious metals.

Money having chiefly a fictitious value, the greater or less plenty of it is of no consequence, if we consider a nation within itself; and the quantity of specie, when once fixed, though ever so large, has no other effect than to oblige every one to tell out a greater number of those shining bits of metal for clothes, furniture, or equipage, without increasing any one convenience of life. If a man borrow money to build a house, he then carries home a greater load; because the stone, timber, lead, glass, &c. with the labour of the masons and carpenters, are represented by a greater quantity of gold and silver. But as these metals are considered chiefly as representations, there can no alteration arise from their bulk or quantity, their weight or colour, either upon their real value or their interest. The same interest, in all cases, bears the same proportion to the sum. And if you lent me so much labour and so many commodities,

by receiving five *per cent* you always receive proportional labour and commodities, however represented, whether by yellow or white coin whether by a pound or an ounce. It is in vain, therefore, to look for the cause of the fall or rise of interest in the greater or less quantity of gold and silver, which is fixed in any nation.

High interest arises from three circumstances: a great demand for borrowing, little riches to supply that demand, and great profits arising from commerce: and the circumstances are a clear proof of the small advance of commerce and industry, not of the scarcity of gold and silver. Low interest, on the other hand, proceeds from the three opposite circumstances: a small demand for borrowing, great riches to supply that demand, and small profits arising from commerce: and these circumstances are all connected together, and proceed from the increase of industry and commerce, not of gold and silver. We shall endeavour to prove these points, and shall begin with the causes and the effects of a great or small demand for borrowing.

When a people have emerged ever so little from a savage state, and their numbers have increased beyond the original multitude, there must immediately arise an inequality of property, and while some possess large tracts of land, others are confined within narrow limits, and some are entirely without landed property. Those who possess more land than they can labour, employ those who possess none and agree to receive a determinate part of the product. Thus the *landed* interest is immediately established, nor is there any settled government, however rude, in which affairs are not on this footing. Of these proprietors of land, some must presently discover themselves to be of different tempers from others, and while one would willingly store up the produce of his land for futurity, another desires to consume at present what should suffice for many years. But

as the spending of a settled revenue is a way of life entirely without occupation ; men have so much need of somewhat to fix and engage them, that pleasures, such as they are, will be the pursuit of the greater part of the landholders, and the prodigals among them will always be more numerous than the misers. In a state, therefore, where there is nothing but a landed interest, as there is little frugality, the borrowers must be very numerous, and the rate of interest must hold proportion to it. The difference depends not on the quantity of money, but on the habits and manners which prevail. By this alone the demand for borrowing is increased or diminished. Were money so plentiful as to make an egg be sold for sixpence ; so long as there are only landed gentry and peasants in the state, the borrowers must be numerous, and interest high. The rent for the same farm would be heavier and more bulky : but the same idleness of the landlord, with the high price of commodities, would dissipate it in the same time, and produce the same necessity and demand for borrowing.<sup>1</sup>

Nor is the case different with regard to the *second* circumstance which we proposed to consider, namely, the great or little riches to supply the demand. This effect also depends on the habits and way of living of the people, not on the quantity of gold.

<sup>1</sup> I have been informed by a very eminent lawyer, and a man of great knowledge and observation, that it appears, from ancient papers and records, that about four centuries ago, money in *Scotland*, and probably in other parts of *Europe*, was only at five per cent., and afterwards rose to ten, before the discovery of the *West Indies*. The fact is curious ; but might easily be reconciled to the foregoing reasoning. Men in that age lived so much at home, and in so very simple and frugal a manner, that they had no occasion for money ; and though the lenders were then few, the borrowers were still fewer. The high rate of interest among the early *Romans* is accounted for by historians from the frequent losses sustained by the inroads of the enemy.

and silver. In order to have, in any state, a great number of lenders, it is not sufficient nor requisite that there be great abundance of the precious metals. It is only requisite that the property or command of that quantity, which is in the state, whether great or small, should be collected in particular hands, so as to form considerable sums, or compose a great moneyed interest. This begets a number of lenders, and sinks the rate of usury; and this, I shall venture to affirm, depends not on the quantity of specie, but on particular manners and customs, which make the specie gather into separate sums or masses of considerable value.

For, suppose that, by miracle, every man in Great Britain should have five pounds slipped into his pocket in one night; this would much more than double the whole money that is at present in the kingdom; yet there would not next day, nor for some time, be any more lenders, nor any variation in the interest. And were there nothing but landlords and peasants in the state, this money, however abundant, could never gather into sums, and would only serve to increase the prices of every thing, without any further consequence. The prodigal landlord dissipates it as fast as he receives it, and the beggarly peasant has no means, nor view, nor ambition of obtaining above a bare livelihood. The overplus of borrowers above that of lenders continuing still the same, there will follow no reduction of interest. That depends upon another principle; and must proceed from an increase of industry and frugality of arts and commerce.

Every thing useful to the life of man arises from the ground; but few things arise in that condition which is requisite to render them useful. There must, therefore, beside the peasants and the proprietors of land, be another rank of men, who, receiving from the former the rude materials, work

them into their proper form, and retain part for their own use and subsistence. In the infancy of society, these contracts between the artisans and the peasants, and between one species of artisans and another, are commonly entered into immediately by the persons themselves, who, being neighbours, are easily acquainted with each other's necessities, and can lend their mutual assistance to supply them. But when men's industry increases, and their views enlarge, it is found, that the most remote parts of the state can assist each other as well as the more contiguous; and that this intercourse of good offices may be carried on to the greatest extent and intricacy. Hence the origin of *merchants*, one of the most useful races of men, who serve as agents between those parts of the state that are wholly unacquainted, and are ignorant of each other's necessities. Here are in a city fifty workmen in silk and linen, and a thousand customers; and these two ranks of men, so necessary to each other, can never rightly meet, till one man erects a shop, to which all the workmen and all the customers repair. In this province, grass rises in abundance: the inhabitants abound in cheese, and butter, and cattle; but want bread and corn, which, in a neighbouring province, are in too great abundance for the use of the inhabitants. One man discovers this. He brings corn from the one province, and returns with cattle; and, supplying the wants of both, he is, so far, a common benefactor. As the people increase in numbers and industry, the difficulty of their intercourse increases: the business of the agency or merchandise becomes more intricate; and divides, subdivides, compounds, and mixes to a greater variety. In all these transactions, it is necessary and reasonable, that a considerable part of the commodities and labour should belong to the merchant, to whom, in a great measure, they are owing. And these commodities he

will sometimes preserve in kind, or more commonly convert into money, which is their common representation. If gold and silver have increased in the state, together with the industry, it will require a great quantity of these metals to represent a great quantity of commodities and labour. If industry alone has increased, the prices of every thing must sink, and a small quantity of specie will serve as a representation.

There is no craving or demand of the human mind more constant and insatiable than that for exercise and employment, and this desire seems the foundation of most of our passions and pursuits. Deprive a man of all business and serious occupation, he runs restless from one amusement to another, and the weight and oppression which he feels from idleness is so great, that he forgets the ruin which must follow him from his immoderate expenses. Give him a more harmless way of employing his mind or body, he is satisfied, and feels no longer that insatiable thirst after pleasure. But if the employment you give him be lucrative, especially if the profit be attached to every particular exertion of industry, he has gum so often in his eye that he acquires, by degrees, a passion for it, and knows no such pleasure as that of seeing the daily increase of his fortune. And this is the reason why trade increases frugality, and why, among merchants, there is the same overplus of misery above prodigality, as among the possessors of land there is the contrary.

Commerce increases industry, by conveying it readily from one member of the state to another, and allowing none of it to perish or become useless. It increases frugality, by giving occupation to men, and employing them in the arts of gain which soon engage their affection, and remove all relish for pleasure and expense. It is an infallible consequence of all industrious professions to forget

frugality, and make the love of gain prevail over the love of pleasure. Among lawyers and physicians who have any practice, there are many more who live within their income, than who exceed it, or even live up to it. But lawyers and physicians beget no industry; and it is even at the expense of others they acquire their riches; so that they are sure to diminish the possessions of some of their fellow-citizens, as fast as they increase their own. Merchants, on the contrary, beget industry, by serving as canals to convey it through every corner of the state: and, at the same time, by their frugality, they acquire great power over that industry, and collect a large property in the labour and commodities, which they are the chief instruments in producing. There is no other profession, therefore, except merchandise, which can make the moneyed interest considerable; or, in other words, can increase industry, and, by also increasing frugality, give a great command of that industry to particular members of the society. Without commerce, the state must consist chiefly of landed gentry, whose prodigality and expense make a continual demand for borrowing; and of peasants, who have no sums to supply that demand. The money never gathers into large stocks or sums, which can be lent at interest. It is dispersed into numberless hands, who either squander it in idle show and magnificence, or employ it in the purchase of the common necessities of life. Commerce alone assembles it into considerable sums; and this effect it has merely from the industry which it begets, and the frugality which it inspires, independent of that particular quantity of precious metal which may circulate in the state.

Thus an increase of commerce, by a necessary consequence, raises a great number of lenders, and by that means produces lowness of interest. We must now consider how far this increase of commerce diminishes the profits arising from that

profession, and gives rise to the *third* circumstance requisite to produce lowness of interest.

It may be proper to observe on this head, that low interest and low profits of merchandise, are two events that mutually forward each other, and are both originally derived from that extensive commerce, which produces opulent merchants, and renders the moneyed interest considerable. Where merchants possess great stocks, whether represented by few or many pieces of metal, it most frequently happens, that, when they either become tired of business, or leave heirs unwilling or unfit to engage in commerce, a great proportion of these riches naturally seeks an annual and secure revenue. The plenty diminishes the price, and makes the lenders accept of a low interest. This consideration obliges many to keep their stock employed in trade, and rather be content with low profits than dispose of their money at an undervalue. On the other hand, when commerce has become extensive, and employs large stocks, there must arise rivalships among the merchants, which diminish the profits of trade, at the same time that they increase the trade itself. The low profits of merchandise induce the merchants to accept more willingly of a low interest when they leave off business, and begin to indulge themselves in ease and indolence. It is needless, therefore, to inquire, which of these circumstances, to wit, *low interest* or *low profits*, is the cause, and which the effect? They both arise from an extensive commerce, and mutually forward each other. No man will accept of low profits where he can have high interest; and no man will accept of low interest where he can have high profits. An extensive commerce, by producing large stocks, diminishes both interest and profits, and is always assisted, in its diminution of the one, by the proportional sinking of the other. I may add, that, as low profits arise from the increase of commerce and industry, they



serve in their turn to its further increase, by rendering the commodities cheaper, encouraging the consumption, and heightening the industry. And thus, if we consider the whole connection of causes and effects, interest is the barometer of the state, and its lowness is a sign, almost infallible, of the flourishing condition of a people. It proves the increase of industry, and its prompt circulation, through the whole state, little inferior to a demonstration. And though, perhaps, it may not be impossible but a sudden and a great check to commerce may have a momentary effect of the same kind, by throwing so many stocks out of trade, it must be attended with such misery and want of employment in the poor, that, besides its short duration, it will not be possible to mistake the one case for the other.

Those who have asserted, that the plenty of money was the cause of low interest, seem to have taken a collateral effect for a cause, since the same industry, which sinks the interest, commonly acquires great abundance of the precious metals. A variety of fine manufactures, with vigilant enterprising merchants, will soon draw money to a state, if it be anywhere to be found in the world. The same cause, by multiplying the conveniences of life, and increasing industry, collects great riches into the hands of persons who are not proprietors of land, and produces, by that means, a lowness of interest. But though both these effects, plenty of money and low interest, naturally arise from commerce and industry, they are altogether independent of each other. For suppose a nation removed into the *Pacific* ocean, without any foreign commerce, or any knowledge of navigation: suppose that this nation possesses always the same stock of coin, but is continually increasing in its numbers and industry: it is evident that the price of every commodity must gradually diminish in that kingdom; since it is the proportion between money and any species of goods

which fixes their mutual value, and, upon the present supposition, the conveniences of life become every day more abundant, without any alteration in the current specie. A less quantity of money, therefore, among this people, will make a rich man, during the times of industry, than would suffice to that purpose in ignorant and slothful ages. Less money will build a house, portion a daughter, buy an estate, support a manufactory, or maintain a family and equipage. These are the uses for which men borrow money, and therefore the greater or less quantity of it in a state has no influence on the interest. But it is evident that the greater or less stock of labour and commodities must have a great influence, since we really and in effect borrow these, when we take money upon interest. It is true, when commerce is extended all over the globe, the most industrious nations always abound most with the precious metals, so that low interest and plenty of money are in fact almost inseparable. But still it is of consequence to know the principle whence any phenomenon arises, and to distinguish between a cause and a concomitant effect. Besides that the speculation is curious, it may frequently be of use in the conduct of public affairs. At least it must be owned, that nothing can be of more use than to improve, by practice, the method of reasoning in these subjects, which of all others are the most important, though they are commonly treated in the loosest and most careless manner.

Another reason of this popular mistake with regard to the cause of low interest, seems to be the instance of some nations where, after a sudden acquisition of money, or of the precious metals by means of foreign conquest, the interest has fallen not only among them, but in all the neighbouring states, as soon as that money was dispersed, and had insinuated itself into every corner. Thus, interest in Spain fell near a half immediately after the discovery

of the West Indies, as we are informed by Garcilas de la Vega; and it has been ever since gradual sinking in every kingdom of Europe. Interest Rome, after the conquest of Egypt, fell from 6 to *per cent.*, as we learn from Dion.

The causes of the sinking of interest, upon such an event, seem different in the conquering count and in the neighbouring states; but in neither them can we justly ascribe that effect merely to the increase of gold and silver.

In the conquering country, it is natural to imagine that this new acquisition of money will fall into few hands; and be gathered into large sums, which seek a secure revenue, either by the purchase of land or by interest; and consequently the same effect follows, for a little time, as if there had been a great accession of industry and commerce. The increase of lenders above the borrowers sinks the interest, and so much the faster if those who have acquired those large sums find no industry or commerce in the state, and no method of employing their money but by lending it at interest. But after this new mass of gold and silver has been digested, and has circulated through the whole state, affairs will soon return to their former situation, while the landlord and new money-holders, living idly, squander about their income; and the former daily contract debt, and the latter encroach on their stock till its final extinction. The whole money may still be in the state, and make itself felt by the increase of prices, but not being now collected into any large mass of stocks, the disproportion between the borrowers and lenders is the same as formerly, and consequently the high interest returns.

Accordingly we find in Rome, that, so early as Tiberius's time, interest had again amounted to 6 *per cent.* though no accident had happened to drain the empire of money. In Trajan's time, money lent on mortgages in Italy bore 6 *per cent.*, on commo

securities in Bithynia 12; and if interest in Spain has not risen to its old pitch, this can be ascribed to nothing but the continuance of the same cause that sunk it, to wit, the large fortunes continually made in the Indies, which come over to Spain from time to time, and supply the demand of the borrowers. By this accidental and extraneous cause, more money is to be lent in Spain, than is, more money is collected into large sums, than would otherwise be found in a state, where there are so little commerce and industry.

As to the reduction of interest which has followed in England, France, and other kingdoms of Europe that have no mines, it has been gradual, and has not proceeded from the increase of money, considered merely in itself, but from that of industry, which is the natural effect of the former increase in that interval, before it raises the price of labour and provisions; for to return to the foregoing supposition, if the industry of England had risen as much from other causes, (and that rise might easily have happened, though the stock of money had remained the same,) must not all the same consequences have followed, which we observe at present? The same people would in that case be found in the kingdom, the same commodities, the same industry, manufactures, and commerce; and consequently the same merchants, with the same stocks, that is, with the same command over labour and commodities, only represented by a smaller number of white or yellow pieces, which, being a circumstance of no moment, would only affect the wagoner, porter, and trunk-maker. Luxury, therefore, manufactures, arts, industry, frugality, flourishing equally as at present, it is evident that interest must also have been as low, since that is the necessary result of all these circumstances, so far as they determine the profits of commerce, and the proportion between the borrowers and lenders in any state.

## ESSAY V

### OF THE BALANCE OF TRADE

It is very usual, in nations ignorant of the nature of commerce, to prohibit the exportation of commodities, and to preserve among themselves whatever they think valuable and useful. They do not consider, that in this prohibition they act directly contrary to their intention ; and that the more is exported of any commodity, the more will be raised at home, of which they themselves will always have the first offer.

It is well known to the learned, that the ancient laws of Athens rendered the exportation of figs criminal ; that being supposed a species of fruit so excellent in Attica, that the Athenians deemed it too delicious for the palate of any foreigner ; and in this ridiculous prohibition they were so much in earnest, that informers were thence called *sycophants* among them, from two Greek words, which signify *figs* and *discoverer*. There are proofs in many old acts of parliament of the same ignorance in the nature of commerce, particularly in the reign of Edward III. ; and to this day, in France, the exportation of corn is almost always prohibited, in order, as they say, to prevent famines ; though it is evident that nothing contributes more to the frequent famines which so much distress that fertile country.

The same jealous fear, with regard to money, has also prevailed among several nations ; and it

required both reason and experience to convince any people, that these prohibitions serve to no other purpose than to raise the exchange against them, and produce a still greater exportation.

These errors, one may say, are gross and palpable, but there still prevails, even in nations well acquainted with commerce, a strong jealousy with regard to the balance of trade, and a fear that all their gold and silver may be leaving them. This seems to me, almost in every case, a groundless apprehension, and I should as soon dread, that all our springs and rivers should be exhausted, as that money should abandon a kingdom where there are people and industry. Let us carefully preserve these latter advantages, and we need never be apprehensive of losing the former.

It is easy to observe, that all calculations concerning the balance of trade are founded on very uncertain facts and suppositions. The custom-house books are allowed to be an insufficient ground of reasoning, nor is the rate of exchange much better, unless we consider it with all nations, and know also the proportions of the several sums remitted, which none may safely pronounce impossible. Every man, who has ever reasoned on this subject, has always proved his theory, whatever it was, by facts and calculations, and by an enumeration of all the commodities sent to all foreign kingdoms.

The writings of Mr. Gee struck the nation with an universal panic when they saw it plainly demonstrated, by a detail of particulars, that the balance was against them for so considerable a sum, as must leave them without a single shilling in five or six years. But luckily, twenty years have since elapsed, with an expensive foreign war, yet it is commonly supposed that money is still more plentiful among us than in any former period.

Nothing can be more entertaining on this head

than Dr. Swift ; an author so quick in discerning the mistakes and absurdities of others. He says, in his *Short View of the State of Ireland*, that the whole eash of that kingdom formerly amounted but to £500,000 ; that out of this the Irish remitted every year a neat million to England, and had scarcely any other source from which they could compensate themselves, and little other foreign trade than the importation of French wines, for which they paid ready money. The consequence of this situation, which must be owned to be disadvantageous; was, that, in a course of three years, the current money of Ireland, from £500,000, was reduced to less than two. And at present, I suppose, in a course of thirty years, it is absolutely nothing. Yet I know not how that opinion of the advance of riches in Ireland, which gave the Doctor so much indignation, seems still to continue, and gain ground with everybody.

In short, this apprehension of the wrong balance of trade, appears of such a nature; that it discovers itself wherever one is out of humour with the ministry, or is in low spirits ; and as it can never be refuted by a particular detail of all the exports which counterbalance the imports, it may here be proper to form a general argument, that may prove the impossibility of this event, so long as we preserve our people and our industry.

Suppose four fifths of all the money in Great Britain to be annihilated in one night, and the nation reduced to the same condition, with regard to specie, as in the reigns of the Harrys and Edwards, what would be the consequence? Must not the price of all labour and commodities sink in proportion, and every thing be sold as cheap as they were in those ages? What nation could then dispute with us in any foreign market, or pretend to navigate or to sell manufactures at the same price, which to us would afford sufficient profit? In how little

time, therefore, must this bring back the money which we had lost, and raise us to the level of all the neighbouring nations? where, after we have arrived, we immediately lose the advantage of the cheapness of labour and commodities, and the further flowing in of money is stopped by our fulness and repletion.

Again, suppose that all the money of Great Britain were multiplied fivefold in a night, must not the contrary effect follow? Must not all labour and commodities rise to such an exorbitant height, that no neighbouring nations could afford to buy from us; while their commodities, on the other hand, become comparatively so cheap, that, in spite of all the laws which could be formed, they would be run in upon us, and our money flow out; till we fall to a level with foreigners, or lose that great superiority of riches, which had laid us under such disadvantages?

Now, it is evident, that the same causes which would correct these exorbitant inequalities, were they to happen miraculously, must prevent their happening in the common course of nature, and must forever, in all neighbouring nations, preserve money nearly proportional to the art and industry of each nation. All water, wherever it communicates, remains always at a level. Ask naturalists the reason; they tell you, that, were it to be raised in any one place, the superior gravity of that part not being balanced, must depress it, till it meets a counterpoise; and that the same cause, which redresses the inequality when it happens, must forever prevent it, without some violent external operation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is another cause, though more limited in its operation, which checks the wrong balance of trade, to every particular nation to which the kingdom trades. When we import more goods than we export, the exchange turns against us, and this becomes a new encouragement to export,



Can one imagine that it had ever been possible, by any laws, or even by any art or industry, to have kept all the money in Spain, which the galleons have brought from the Indies? Or that all commodities could be sold in France for a tenth of the price which they would yield on the other side of the Pyrenees, without finding their way thither, and draining from that immense treasure? What other reason, indeed, is there, why all nations at present gain in their trade with Spain and Portugal, but because it is impossible to heap up money, more than any fluid, beyond its proper level? The sovereigns of these countries have shown, that they wanted not inclination to keep their gold and silver to themselves, had it been in any degree practicable.

But as any body of water may be raised above the level of the surrounding element, if the former has no communication with the latter; so in money, if the communication be cut off, by any material or physical impediment (for all laws alone are ineffectual), there may, in such a case, be a very great inequality of money. Thus the immense distance of China, together with the monopolies of our India companies obstructing the communication, preserve in Europe the gold and silver, especially the latter, in much greater plenty than they are found in that kingdom. But, notwithstanding this great obstruction, the force of the causes above mentioned is still evident. The skill and ingenuity of Europe in general surpasses perhaps that of China, with regard to manual arts and manufactures, yet are we never able to trade thither without great disadvantage. And were it not for the continual recruits which we receive from America, money would soon sink in Europe, and rise in China, till it came nearly to a level in both places. Nor can any reasonable man

as much as the charge of carriage and insurance of the money which becomes due would amount to. For the exchange can never rise but a little higher than that sum.

doubt, but that industrious nation, were they as near as Poland or Barbary, would drain us of the overplus of our specie, and draw to themselves a larger share of the West India treasures. We need not have recourse to a physical attraction, in order to explain the necessity of this operation. There is a moral attraction, arising from the interests and passions of men, which is full as potent and infallible.

How is the balance kept in the provinces of every kingdom among themselves, but by the force of this principle, which makes it impossible for money to lose its level, and either to rise or sink beyond the proportion of the labour and commodities which are in each province? Did not long experience make people easy on this head, what a fund of gloomy reflections might calculations afford to a melancholy Yorkshireman, while he computed and magnified the sums drawn to London by taxes, absentees, commodities, and found on comparison the opposite articles so much inferior<sup>1</sup>. And no doubt, had the *Heptarchy* subsisted in England, the legislature of each state had been continually alarmed by the fear of a wrong balance, and as it is probable that the mutual hatred of these states would have been extremely violent on account of their close neighbourhood, they would have loaded and oppressed all commerce, by a jealous and superfluous caution. Since the Union has removed the barriers between Scotland and England, which of these nations gains from the other by this free commerce? Or if the former kingdom has received any increase of riches, can it reasonably be accounted for by any thing but the increase of its art and industry? It was a common apprehension in England before the Union, as we learn from L'Abbe du Bos,<sup>1</sup> that Scotland would soon drain them of their treasures, were an open trade allowed, and on the other side of the

<sup>1</sup> Les Intérêts d'Angleterre mal entendus

Tweed a contrary apprehension prevailed : with what justice in both, time has shown.

What happens in small portions of mankind must take place in greater. The provinces of the Roman empire, no doubt, kept their balance with each other, and with Italy, independent of the legislature ; as much as the several counties of Great Britain, or the several parishes of each county. And any man who travels over Europe at this day, may see, by the prices of commodities, that money, in spite of the absurd jealousy of princes and states, has brought itself nearly to a level ; and that the difference between one kingdom and another is not greater in this respect, than it is often between different provinces of the same kingdom. Men naturally flock to capital cities, seaports, and navigable rivers. There we find more men, more industry, more commodities, and consequently more money, but still the latter difference holds proportion with the former, and the level is preserved.<sup>1</sup>

Our jealousy and our hatred of France are without bounds ; and the former sentiment, at least, must be acknowledged reasonable and wellgrounded. These passions have occasioned innumerable barriers and obstructions upon commerce, where we are

<sup>1</sup> It must carefully be remarked, that throughout this discourse, wherever I speak of the level of money, I mean always its proportional level to the commodities, labour, industry, and skill, which is in the several states. And I assert, that where these advantages are double, triple, quadruple, to what they are in the neighbouring states, the money infallibly will also be double, triple, and quadruple. The only circumstance that can obstruct the exactness of these proportions, is the expense of transporting the commodities from one place to another ; and this expense is sometimes unequal. Thus the corn, cattle, cheese, butter of Derbyshire, cannot draw the money of London, so much as the manufactures of London draw the money of Derbyshire. But this objection is only a seeming one ; for so far as the transport of commodities is expensive, so far is the communication between the places obstructed and imperfect.

accused of being commonly the aggressors. But what have we gained by the bargain? We lost the French market for our woollen manufactures, and transferred the commerce of wine to Spain and Portugal, where we buy worse liquor at a higher price. There are few Englishmen who would not think their country absolutely ruined, were French wines sold in England so cheap and in such abundance as to supplant, in some measure, all ale and home-brewed liquors. But would we lay aside prejudice, it would not be difficult to prove, that nothing could be more innocent, perhaps advantageous. Each new acre of vineyard planted in France, in order to supply England with wine would make it requisite for the French to take the produce of an English acre, sown in wheat or barley, in order to subsist themselves, and it is evident that we should thereby get command of the better commodity.

There are many edicts of the French king, prohibiting the planting of new vineyards, and ordering all those which are lately planted to be grubbed up; so sensible are they, in that country, of the superior value of corn above every other product.

Mareschal Vauban complains often, and with reason, of the absurd duties which lord the entry of those wines of Languedoc, Guienne, and other southern provinces, that are imported into Britain and Normandy. He entertained no doubt but these latter provinces could preserve their balance, notwithstanding the open commerce which he recommends. And it is evident, that a few leagues more navigation to England would make no difference, or if it did, that it must operate alike on the commodities of both kingdoms.

There is indeed an expedient by which it is possible to sink, and another by which we may raise money beyond its natural level in any kingdom, but these cases, when examined, will be

found to resolve into our general theory, and to bring additional authority to it.

I scarcely know any method of sinking money below its level, but those institutions of banks, funds, and paper credit, which are so much practised in this kingdom. These render paper equivalent to money, circulate it throughout the whole state, make it supply the place of gold and silver, raise proportionably the price of labour and commodities, and by that means either banish a great part of those precious metals, or prevent their further increase. What can be more short-sighted than our reasonings on this head? We fancy, because an individual would be much richer, were his stock of money doubled, that the same good effect would follow, were the money of every one increased; not considering that this would raise as much the price of every commodity, and reduce every man in time to the same condition as before. It is only in our public negotiations and transactions with foreigners, that a greater stock of money is advantageous; and as our paper is there absolutely insignificant, we feel, by its means, all the ill effects arising from a great abundance of money, without reaping any of the advantages.<sup>1</sup>

Suppose that there are 12 millions of paper, which circulate in the kingdom as money (for we are not to imagine that all our enormous funds are employed in that shape), and suppose the real cash of the kingdom to be 18 millions: here is a state which is found by experience to be able to hold a stock of 30 millions. I say, if it be able to hold

<sup>1</sup> We observed in Essay III. that money, when increasing, gives encouragement to industry, during the interval between the increase of money and rise of the prices. A good effect of this nature may follow too from paper credit; but it is dangerous to precipitate matters at the risk of losing all by the failing of that credit, as must happen upon any violent shock in public affairs.

it, it must of necessity have acquired it in gold and silver, had we not obstructed the entrance of these metals by this new invention of paper. *Whence would it have acquired that sum?* From all the kingdoms of the world. *But why?* Because if you remove these 12 millions, money in this state is below its level, compared with our neighbours; and we must immediately draw from all of them, till we be full and saturate, so to speak, and can hold no more. By our present politics, we are as careful to stuff the nation with this fine commodity of bank bills and chequer notes, as if we were afraid of being overburdened with the precious metals.

It is not to be doubted, but the great plenty of Lillon in France is, in a great measure, owing to the want of paper-credit. The French have no banks: merchants' bills do not circulate as with us: usury, or lending on interest, is not directly permitted, so that many have large sums in their coffers: great quantities of plate are used in private houses; and all the churches are full of it. By this means, provisions and labour still remain cheaper among them, than in nations that are not half so rich in gold and silver. The advantages of this situation, in point of trade, as well as in great public emergencies, are too evident to be disputed.

The same fashion a few years ago prevailed in Genoa, which still has place in England and Holland, of using services of China ware instead of plate; but the senate, foreseeing the consequence, prohibited the use of that brittle commodity beyond a certain extent; while the use of silver plate was left unlimited. And I suppose, in their late distresses, they felt the good effect of this ordinance. Our tax on plate is, perhaps, in this view, somewhat impolitic.

Before the introduction of paper money into our colonies, they had gold and silver sufficient for their

circulation. Since the introduction of that commodity, the least inconveniency that has followed is the total banishment of the precious metals. And after the abolition of paper, can it be doubted but money will return, while those colonies possess manufactures and commodities, the only thing valuable in commerce, and for whose sake alone all men desire money?

What pity Lycurgus did not think of paper-credit, when he wanted to banish gold and silver from Sparta! It would have served his purpose better than the lumps of iron he made use of as money; and would also have prevented more effectually all commerce with strangers, as not being of so much real and intrinsic value.

It must, however, be confessed, that, as all these questions of trade and money are extremely complicated, there are certain lights in which this subject may be placed, so as to represent the advantages of paper-credit and banks to be superior to their disadvantages. That they banish specie and bullion from a state, is undoubtedly true; and whoever looks no further than this circumstance, does well to condemn them; but specie and bullion are not of so great consequence as not to admit of a compensation, and even an overbalance from the increase of industry and of credit, which may be promoted by the right use of paper-money. It is well known of what advantage it is to a merchant to be able to discount his bills upon occasion; and every thing that facilitates this species of traffic is favourable to the general commerce of a state. But private bankers are enabled to give such credit by the credit they receive from the depositing of money in their shops; and the Bank of England, in the same manner, from the liberty it has to issue its notes in all payments. There was an invention of this kind which was fallen upon some years ago by the banks of Edinburgh, and which, as it is one of the most

ingemo is id est that has been exercised in commerce, has also been thought advantageous to Scotland. It is there called a bank credit, and is of this nature. A man goes to the bank, and finds surety to the amount, we shall suppose, of a thousand pounds. This money, or any part of it, he has the liberty of drawing out whenever he pleases, and he pays only the ordinary interest for it while it is in his hands. He may, when he pleases, repay any sum so small as twenty pounds, and the interest is discounted from the very day of the repayment. The advantages resulting from this contrivance are manifold.

As a man may find surety nearly to the amount of his substance, and his bank credit is equivalent to ready money, a merchant does hereby in a manner convert his houses, his household furniture, the goods in his warehouse, the foreign debts due to him, his ships at sea; and can, upon occasion, employ them in all payments, as if they were the current money of the country. If a man borrow a thousand pounds from a private hand, besides that it is not always to be found when required, he pays interest for it whether he be using it or not. His bank credit costs him nothing except during the very moment in which it is of service to him: and this circumstance is of equal advantage as if he had borrowed money at much lower interest. Merchants likewise, from this invention, acquire a great facility in supporting each other's credit, which is a considerable security against bankruptcies. A man, when his own bank credit is exhausted, goes to any of his neighbours who is not in the same condition, and he gets the money, which he repays at his convenience.

After this practice had taken place during some years at Edinburgh, several companies of merchants at Glasgow carried the matter further. They associated themselves into different banks, and issued notes so low as ten shillings, which they used in all payments for goods, manufactures, tradesmen's



labour of all kinds; and these notes, from the established credit of the companies, passed as money in all payments throughout the country. By this means, a stock of five thousand pounds was able to perform the same operations as if it were six or seven; and merchants were thereby enabled to trade to a greater extent, and to require less profit in all their transactions. But whatever other advantages result from these inventions, it must still be allowed, that, besides giving too great facility to credit, which is dangerous, they banish the precious metals: and nothing can be a more evident proof of it than a comparison of the past and present condition of Scotland in that particular. It was found, upon the recoinage made after the Union, that there was near a million of specie in that country: but notwithstanding the great increase of riches, commerce, and manufactures of all kinds, it is thought, that, even where there is no extraordinary drain made by England, the current specie will not now amount to a third of that sum.

But as our projects of paper-credit are almost the only expedient by which we can sink money below its level, so, in my opinion, the only expedient by which we can raise money above it, is a practice which we should all exclaim against as destructive, namely, the gathering of large sums into a public treasure, locking them up, and absolutely preventing their circulation. The fluid, not communicating with the neighbouring element, may, by such an artifice, be raised to what height we please. To prove this, we need only return to our first supposition, of annihilating the half or any part of our cash; where we found, that the immediate consequence of such an event would be the attraction of an equal sum from all the neighbouring kingdoms. Nor does there seem to be any necessary bounds set, by the nature of things, to this practice of hoarding. A small city like Geneva, continuing this policy for

ness, might engross nine tenths of the money of Europe. There seems, indeed, in the nature of man, an insurmountable obstacle to that immense growth of riches. A weak state, with an enormous treasure, will soon become a prey to some of its powers, or more powerful neighbours. A great state would dissipate its wealth in dangerous and ill-concerted projects, and probably destroy, with it, what is much more valuable, the industry, morals, and numbers of its people. The flood, in this case, raised to too great a height, bursts and destroys the vessel that contains it; and, mixing itself with the surrounding element, soon falls to its proper level.

So little are we commonly acquainted with this principle, that, though all historians agree in relating uniformly so recent an event as the immense treasure amassed by Henry VII. (which they make amount to 1,700,000 pounds), we rather reject their concurring testimony than admit of a fact which agrees so ill with our inveterate prejudices. It is indeed probable that this sum might be three fourths of all the money in England. But where is the difficulty in conceiving that such a sum might be amassed in twenty years by a cunning, rapacious, frugal, and almost absolute monarch? Nor is it probable that the diminution of circulating money was ever sensibly felt by the people, or ever did them any prejudice. The sinking of the prices of all commodities would immediately replace it, by giving England the advantage in its commerce with the neighbouring kingdoms.

Have we not an instance in the small republic of Athens with its allies, who, in about fifty years between the Median and Peloponnesian wars, amassed a sum not much inferior to that of Henry VII.?<sup>1</sup> For all the Greek historians and orators agree, that

<sup>1</sup> There were about eight ounces of silver in a pound sterling in Henry VII.'s time.

the Athenians collected in the citadel more than 10,000 talents, which they afterwards dissipated to their own ruin, in rash and imprudent enterprises. But when this money was set a running, and began to communicate with the surrounding fluid, what was the consequence? Did it remain in the state? No. For we find, by the memorable *census* mentioned by Demosthenes and Polybius, that, in about fifty years afterwards, the whole value of the republic, comprehending lands, houses, commodities, slaves, and money, was less than 6,000 talents.

What an ambitious high-spirited people was this, to collect and keep in their treasury, with a view to conquests, a sum, which it was every day in the power of the citizens, by a single vote, to distribute among themselves, and which would have gone near to triple the riches of every individual! For we must observe, that the numbers and private riches of the Athenians are said, by ancient writers, to have been no greater at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, than at the beginning of the Macedonian.

Money was little more plentiful in Greece during the age of Philip and Perseus, than in England during that of Harry VII. : yet these two monarchs in thirty years collected from the small kingdom of Macedon, a larger treasure than that of the English monarch. Paulus Æmilius brought to Rome about 1,700,000 pounds sterling. Pliny says, 2,400,000. And that was but a part of the Macedonian treasure. The rest was dissipated by the resistance and flight of Perseus.

We may learn from Stanian, that the canton of Berne had 300,000 pounds lent at interest, and had about six times as much in their treasury. Here then is a sum hoarded of 1,800,000 pounds sterling, which is at least quadruple what should naturally circulate in such a petty state; and yet no one, who travels in the Pais de Vaux, or any part of that

canton, observes any want of money more than could be supposed in a country of that extent, soil, and situation. On the contrary, there are scarce any inland provinces in the continent of France or Germany, where the inhabitants are at this time so opulent, though that canton has vastly increased its treasure since 1714, the time when Stanian wrote his judicious account of Switzerland <sup>1</sup>

The account given by Appian<sup>2</sup> of the treasure of the Ptolemies, is so prodigious, that one cannot admit of it, and so much the less, because the historian says, that the other successors of Alexander were also frugal, and had many of them treasures not much inferior. For this saving humour of the neighbouring princes must necessarily have checked the frugality of the Egyptian monarchs, according to the foregoing theory. The sum he mentions is 740,000 talents, or 191,166,666 pounds 13 shillings and 4 pence, according to Dr Arbuthnot's computation. And yet Appian says, that he extracted his account from the public records, and he was himself a native of Alexandria.

From these principles we may learn what judgment we ought to form of those numberless barriers, obstructions and imposts, which all nations of Europe, and none more than England, have put upon trade, from an exorbitant desire of amassing money, which never will heap up beyond its level, while it circulates, or from an ill grounded apprehension of losing their specie, which never will sink below it. Could any thing scatter our riches, it would be such impolitic contrivances. But this general ill effect, however, results from them, that they deprive neighbouring nations of that free

<sup>1</sup> The poverty which Stanian speaks of is only to be seen in the most mountainous cantons where there is no commodity to bring money. And even there the people are not poorer than in the diocese of Saltsburgh on the one hand, or Savoy on the other.

<sup>2</sup> Proem

communication and exchange which the Author of the world has intended, by giving them soils, climates, and geniuses, so different from each other.

Our modern politics embrace the only method of banishing money, the using of paper-credit; they reject the only method of amassing it, the practice of hoarding; and they adopt a hundred contrivances, which serve to no purpose but to check industry, and rob ourselves and our neighbours of the common benefits of art and nature.

All taxes, however, upon foreign commodities, are not to be regarded as prejudicial or useless, but those only which are founded on the jealousy above mentioned. A tax on German linen encourages home manufactures, and thereby multiplies our people and industry. A tax on brandy increases the sale of rum, and supports our southern colonies. And as it is necessary that imposts should be levied for the support of government, it may be thought more convenient to lay them on foreign commodities, which can easily be intercepted at the port, and subjected to the impost. We ought, however, always to remember the maxim of Dr. Swift, that, in the arithmetic of the customs, two and two make not four, but often make only one. It can scarcely be doubted, but if the duties on wine were lowered to a third, they would yield much more to the government than at present; our people might thereby afford to drink commonly a better and more wholesome liquor; and no prejudice would ensue to the balance of trade, of which we are so jealous. The manufacture of ale beyond the agriculture is but inconsiderable, and gives employment to few hands. The transport of wine and corn would not be much inferior.

But are there not frequent instances, you will say, of states and kingdoms, which were formerly rich and opulent, and are now poor and beggarly? Has not the money left them, with which they formerly

abounded? I answer, If they lose their trade, industry, and people, they cannot expect to keep their gold and silver for these precious metals will hold proportion to the former advantages. When Lisbon and Amsterdam got the East India trade from Venice and Genoa, they also got the profits and money which arose from it. Where the seat of government is transferred, where expensive armies are maintained at a distance, where great funds are possessed by foreigners, there naturally follows from these causes a diminution of the specie. But these, we may observe, are violent and forcible methods of carrying away money, and are in time commonly attended with the transport of people and industry. But where these remain, and the drain is not continued, the money always finds its way back again, by a hundred canals, of which we have no notion or suspicion. What immense treasures have been spent, by so many nations, in murders, since the Revolution, in the course of three long wars? More money perhaps than the half of what is at present in Europe. But what has now become of it? Is it in the narrow compass of the Austrian provinces? No, surely it has most of it returned to the several countries whence it came, and has followed that art and industry by which at first it was acquired. For above a thousand years, the money of Europe has been flowing to Rome, by an open and sensible current; but it has been emptied by many secret and insensible canals and the want of industry and commerce renders at present the Papal dominions the poorest territory in all Italy.

In short, a government has great reason to preserve with care its people and its manufactures. Its money, it may safely trust to the course of human affairs, without fear or jealousy. Or, if it ever give attention to this latter circumstance, it ought only to be so far as it affects the former.

## ESSAY VI

### OF THE JEALOUSY OF TRADE

HAVING endeavoured to remove one species of ill-founded jealousy, which is so prevalent among commercial nations, it may not be amiss to mention another, which seems equally groundless. Nothing is more usual, among states which have made some advances in commerce, than to look on the progress of their neighbours with a suspicious eye, to consider all trading states as their rivals, and to suppose that it is impossible for any of them to flourish, but at their expense. In opposition to this narrow and malignant opinion, I will venture to assert, that the increase of riches and commerce in any one nation, instead of hurting, commonly promotes the riches and commerce of all its neighbours; and that a state can scarcely carry its trade and industry very far, where all the surrounding states are buried in ignorance, sloth, and barbarism.

It is obvious, that the domestic industry of a people cannot be hurt by the greatest prosperity of their neighbours; and as this branch of commerce is undoubtedly the most important in any extensive kingdom, we are so far removed from all reason of jealousy. But I go further, and observe, that where an open communication is preserved among nations, it is impossible but the domestic industry of every one must receive an increase from the improvements of the others. Compare the situation of Great Britain at present, with what it was two centuries

ago. All the arts, both of agriculture and manufactures, were then extremely rude and imperfect. Every improvement which we have since made, has arisen from our imitation of foreigners; and we ought so far to esteem it happy, that they had previously made advances in arts and ingenuity. But this intercourse is still upheld to our great advantage notwithstanding the advanced state of our manufactures, we daily adopt, in every art, the inventions and improvements of our neighbours. The commodity is first imported from abroad, to our great discontent, while we imagine that it drains us of our money: afterwards the art itself is gradually imported, to our visible advantage: yet we continue still to repine, that our neighbours should possess any art, industry, and invention, forgetting that, had they not first instructed us, we should have been at present barbarians, and did they not still continue their instructions, the arts must fall into a state of languor, and lose that emulation and novelty which contribute so much to their advancement.

The increase of domestic industry lays the foundation of foreign commerce. Where a great number of commodities are raised and perfected for the home market, there will always be found some which can be exported with advantage. But if our neighbours have no art or cultivation, they cannot take them, because they will have nothing to give in exchange. In this respect, states are in the same condition as individuals. A single man can scarcely be industrious, where all his fellow-citizens are idle. The riches of the several members of a community contribute to increase my riches, whatever profession I may follow. They consume the produce of my industry, and afford me the produce of theirs in return.

Nor needs any state entertain apprehensions, that their neighbours will improve to such a degree



in every art and manufacture, as to have no demand from them. Nature, by giving a diversity of geniuses, climates, and soils to different nations, has secured their mutual intercourse and commerce, as long as they all remain industrious and civilized. Nay, the more the arts increase in any state, the more will be its demands from its industrious neighbours. The inhabitants, having become opulent and skilful, desire to have every commodity in the utmost perfection; and as they have plenty of commodities to give in exchange, they make large importations from every foreign country. The industry of the nations, from whom they import, receives encouragement: their own is also increased, by the sale of the commodities which they give in exchange.

But what if a nation has any staple commodity, such as the woollen manufacture is in England? Must not the interfering of our neighbours in that manufacture be a loss to us? I answer, that, when any commodity is denominated the staple of a kingdom, it is supposed that this kingdom has some peculiar and natural advantages for raising the commodity; and if, notwithstanding these advantages, they lose such a manufacture, they ought to blame their own idleness or bad government, not the industry of their neighbours. It ought also to be considered, that, by the increase of industry among the neighbouring nations, the consumption of every particular species of commodity is also increased; and though foreign manufactures interfere with them in the market, the demand for their product may still continue, or even increase. And should it diminish, ought the consequence to be esteemed so fatal? If the spirit of industry be preserved, it may easily be diverted from one branch to another; and the manufacturers of wool, for instance, be employed in linen, silk, iron, or any other commodities for which there appears to

be a demand. We need not apprehend, that all the objects of industry will be exhausted, or that our manufacturers, while they remain on an equal footing with those of our neighbours, will be in danger of wanting employment. The emulation among rival nations serves rather to keep industry alive in all of them: and any people is happier who possess a variety of manufactures, than if they enjoyed one single great manufacture, in which they are all employed. Their situation is less precarious, and they will feel less sensibly those revolutions and uncertainties, to which every particular branch of commerce will always be exposed.

*The only commercial state that ought to dread the improvements and industry of their neighbours is such a one as the Dutch, who, enjoying no extent of land, nor possessing any number of native commodities, flourish only by their being the brokers and factors, and carriers of others.* Such a people may naturally apprehend, that as soon as the neighbouring states come to know and pursue their interest, they will take into their own hands the management of their affairs and deprive their brokers of that profit which they formerly reap from it. But though this consequence may naturally be dreaded, it is very long before it takes place, and by art and industry it may be warded off for many generations, if not wholly eluded.

The advantage of superior stocks and correspondence is so great, that it is not easily overcome, and as all the transactions increase by the increase of industry in the neighbouring states, even a people whose commerce stands on this precarious basis may at first reap a considerable profit from the flourishing condition of their neighbours. The Dutch having mortgaged all their revenues, make not such a figure in political transactions as formerly, but their commerce is surely equal to what it was in the middle of the last century,

when they were reckoned among the great powers of Europe.

Were our narrow and malignant politics to meet with success, we should reduce all our neighbouring nations to the same state of sloth and ignorance that prevails in Morocco and the coast of Barbary. But what would be the consequence? They could send us no commodities: they could take none from us: our domestic commerce itself would languish for want of emulation, example, and instruction: and we ourselves should soon fall into the same abject condition to which we had reduced them. I shall therefore venture to acknowledge, that, not only as a man, but as a British subject, I pray for the flourishing commerce of Germany, Spain, Italy, and even France itself. I am at least certain that Great Britain, and all those nations, would flourish more, did their sovereigns and ministers adopt such 'enlarged and benevolent sentiments towards each other.

## ESSAY VII

### OF THE BALANCE OF POWER

It is a question, whether the *idea* of the balance of power be owing entirely to modern policy, or whether the *phrase* only has been invented in these later ages? It is certain that Xenophon, in his Institution of Cyrus, represents the combination of the Asiatic powers to have arisen from a jealousy of the increasing force of the Medes and Persians, and though that elegant composition should be supposed altogether a romance, this sentiment, ascribed by the author to the Eastern princes, is at least a proof of the prevailing notion of ancient times.

In all the politics of Greece, the anxiety with regard to the balance of power, is apparent, and is expressly pointed out to us, even by the ancient historians. Thucydides represents the league which was formed against Athens, and which produced the Peloponnesian war, as entirely owing to this principle. And after the decline of Athens, when the Thebans and Lacedemonians disputed for sovereignty, we find that the Athenians (as well as many other republics) always threw themselves into the lighter scale, and endeavoured to preserve the balance. They supported Thebes against Sparta, till the great victory gained by Epaminondas at Leuctra, after which they immediately went over to the conquered, from generosity, as they pretended, but in reality from their jealousy of the conquerors.

Whoever will read Demosthenes' oration for the Megalopolitans, may see the utmost refinements on this principle that ever entered into the head of a Venetian or English speculatist. And upon the first rise of the Macedonian power, this orator immediately discovered the danger, sounded the alarm throughout all Greece, and at last assembled that confederacy under the banners of Athens which fought the great and decisive battle of Chæronea.

It is true, the Grecian wars are regarded by historians as wars of emulation rather than of politics ; and each state seems to have had more in view the honour of leading the rest, than any wellgrounded hopes of authority and dominion. If we consider, indeed, the small number of inhabitants in any one republic compared to the whole, the great difficulty of forming sieges in those times, and the extraordinary bravery and discipline of every freeman among that noble people ; we shall conclude, that the balance of power was, of itself, sufficiently secured in Greece, and needed not to have been guarded with that caution which may be requisite in other ages. But whether we ascribe the shifting of sides in all the Grecian republics to *jealous emulation* or *cautious politics*, the effects were alike, and every prevailing power was sure to meet with a confederacy against it, and that often composed of its former friends and allies.

The same principle, call it envy or prudence, which produced the *Ostracism* of Athens, and *Petalism* of Syracuse, and expelled every citizen whose fame or power overtopped the rest ; the same principle, I say, naturally discovered itself in foreign politics, and soon raised enemies to the leading state, however moderate in the exercise of its authority.

The Persian monarch was really, in his force, a petty prince compared to the Grecian republics ; and, therefore, it behoved him, from views of safety more than from emulation, to interest himself in

their quarrels, and to support the weaker side in every contest. This was the advice given by Alcibiades to Timophanes, and it prolonged, near a century, the date of the Persian empire, till the neglect of it for a moment, after the first appearance of the aspiring genius of Philip, brought that lofty and splendid edifice to the ground, with a rapidity of which there are few instances in the history of mankind.

The successors of Alexander showed great jealousy of the balance of power, a jealousy founded on true politics and prudence, and which preserved distinct for several ages the partition made after the death of that famous conqueror. The fortune and ambition of Antigonus threatened them anew with a universal monarchy; but their combination, and their victory at Ipsus, saved them. And in subsequent times, we find, that, as the Eastern princes considered the Greeks and Macedonians as the only real military force with whom they had any intercourse, they kept always a watchful eye over that part of the world. The Ptolemies, in particular, supported first Antus and the Achæans, and then Cleomenes king of Sparta, from no other view than as a counterbalance to the Macedonian monarchs. For this is the account which Polybius gives of the Egyptian politics.

The reason why it is supposed that the ancients were entirely ignorant of the *balance of power*, seems to be drawn from the Roman history more than the Grecian; and as the transactions of the former are generally more familiar to us, we have thence formed all our conclusions. It must be owned, that the Romans never met with any such general combination or confederacy against them, as might naturally have been expected from their rapid conquests and declared ambition, but were allowed peaceably to subdue their neighbours, one after another, till they extended their dominion over the

whole known world. Not to mention the fabulous history of the Italic wars,<sup>1</sup> there was, upon Hannibal's invasion of the Roman state, a remarkable crisis, which ought to have called up the attention of all civilized nations. It appeared afterwards (nor was it difficult to be observed at the time) that this was a contest for universal empire; yet no prince or state seems to have been in the least alarmed about the event or issue of the quarrel. Philip of Macedon remained neuter, till he saw the victories of Hannibal; and then most imprudently formed

<sup>1</sup> There have strong suspicions of late arisen amongst critics, and, in my opinion, not without reason, concerning the first ages of the *Roman* history, as if they were almost entirely fabulous, till after the sacking of the city by the *Gauls*, and were even doubtful for some time afterwards, till the Greeks began to give attention to Roman affairs, and commit them to writing. This scepticism seems to me, however, scarcely defensible in its full extent, with regard to the domestic history of *Rome*, which has some air of truth and probability, and could scarce be the invention of an historian who had so little morals or judgment as to indulge himself in fiction and romance. The revolutions seem so well proportioned to their causes, the progress of their factions is so conformable to political experience, the manners and maxims of the age are so uniform and natural, that scarce any real history affords more just reflection and improvement. Is not Machiavel's comment on Livy (a work surely of great judgment and genius) founded entirely on this period, which is represented as fabulous? I would willingly, therefore, in my private sentiments, divide the matter with these critics, and allow, that the battles and victories and triumphs of those ages had been extremely falsified by family memoirs, as Cicero says they were. But as, in the accounts of domestic factions, there were two opposite relations transmitted to posterity, this both served as a check upon fiction, and enabled latter historians to gather some truth from comparison and reasoning. Half of the slaughter which Livy commits on the *Æqui* and the *Volsci* would depopulate France and Germany; and that historian, though perhaps he may be justly charged as superficial, is at last shocked himself with the incredibility of his narration. The same love of exaggeration seems to have magnified the numbers of the Romans in their armies and *census*.

an alliance with the conqueror, upon terms still more imprudent. He stipulated, that he was to assist the Carthaginian state in their conquest of Italy, after which they engaged to send over forces into Greece, to assist him in subduing the Grecian commonwealths.

The Rhodian and Achaean republics are much celebrated by ancient historians for their wisdom and sound policy; yet both of them assisted the Romans in their wars against Philip and Antiochus. And what may be esteemed still a stronger proof, that this maxim was not generally known in those ages, no ancient author has remarked the imprudence of these measures, nor has even blamed that absurd treaty above mentioned, made by Philip with the Carthaginians. Princes and statesmen, in all ages, may, beforehand, be blinded in their reasonings with regard to events: but it is somewhat extraordinary that historians, afterwards should not form a sounder judgment of them.

Massinissa, Attalus, Prusias, in gratifying their private passions were all of them the instruments of the Roman greatness, and never seem to have suspected, that they were forging their own chains while they advanced the conquests of their ally. A simple treaty and agreement between Massinissa and the Carthaginians, so much required by mutual interest, would have barred the Romans from all entrance into Africa and preserved liberty to mankind.

The only prince we meet with in the Roman history, who seems to have understood the balance of power, is Hiero, king of Syracuse. Though the ally of Rome, he sent assistance to the Carthaginians during the war of the auxiliaries. "It seeming it requisite," says Polybius, "both in order to retain his dominions in Sicily, and to preserve the Roman friendship, that Carthage should be safe, lest by its fall the remaining power should be able, without contrast or opposition, to execute every



purpose and undertaking. And here he acted with great wisdom and prudence: for that is never, on any account, to be overlooked; nor ought such a force ever to be thrown into one hand, as to incapacitate the neighbouring states from defending their rights against it." Here is the aim of modern politics pointed out in express terms.

In short, the maxim of preserving the balance of power is founded so much on common sense and obvious reasoning, that it is impossible it could altogether have escaped antiquity, where we find, in other particulars, so many marks of deep penetration and discernment. If it was not so generally known and acknowledged as at present, it had at least an influence on all the wiser and more experienced princes and politicians. And indeed, even at present, however generally known and acknowledged among speculative reasoners, it has not, in practice, an authority much more extensive among those who govern the world.

After the fall of the Roman empire, the form of government, established by the northern conquerors, incapacitated them, in a great measure, for further conquests, and long maintained each state in its proper boundaries. But when vassalage and the feudal militia were abolished, mankind were anew alarmed by the danger of universal monarchy, from the union of so many kingdoms and principalities in the person of the Emperor Charles. But the power of the house of Austria, founded on extensive but divided dominions; and their riches, derived chiefly from mines of gold and silver, were more likely to decay of themselves, from internal defects, than to overthrow all the bulwarks raised against them. In less than a century, the force of that violent and haughty race was shattered, their opulence dissipated, their splendour eclipsed. A new power succeeded, more formidable to the liberties of Europe, possessing all the advantages of the

former, and labouring under none of its defects, except a share of that spirit of bigotry and persecution, with which the house of Austria was so long, and still is, so much infatuated.<sup>1</sup>

In the general wars maintained against this ambitious power, Great Britain has stood foremost, and she still maintains her station. Beside her advantages of riches and situation, her people are animated with such a national spirit, and are so fully sensible of the blessings of their government, that we may hope their vigour never will languish in so necessary and so just a cause. On the contrary, if we may judge by the past, their passionate ardour seems rather to require some moderation; and they have oftener erred from a laudable excess than from a blamable deficiency.

In the first place, we seem to have been more possessed with the ancient Greek spirit of jealous emulation, than actuated by the prudent views of modern politics. Our wars with France have been begun with justice, and even perhaps from necessity, but have always been too far pushed, from obstinacy and passion. The same peace, which was afterwards made at Ryswick in 1697, was offered so early as the year ninety-two; that concluded at Utrecht

<sup>1</sup> Europe has now, for above a century, remained on the defensive against the greatest force that ever perhaps was formed by the civil or political combination of mankind. And such is the influence of the maxim here treated of that, though that ambitious nation, in the five last general wars, have been victorious in four,<sup>1</sup> and unsuccessful only in one,<sup>2</sup> they have not much enlarged their dominions, nor acquired a total ascendant over Europe. On the contrary, there remains still some hope of maintaining the resistance so long, that the natural revolutions of human affairs, together with unforeseen events and accidents, may guard us against universal monarchy, and preserve the world from so great an evil.

<sup>1</sup> Those concluded by the peace of the Pyrenees, Nimeguen, Passawick, and Aix-la-Chapelle.

<sup>2</sup> That concluded by the peace of Utrecht.

in 1712, might have been finished on as good conditions at Gertruytenberg, in the year eight; and we might have given at Frankfort, in 1743, the same terms which we were glad to accept of at Aix-la-Chapelle in the year forty-eight. Here then we see, that above half of our wars with France, and all our public debts, are owing more to our own imprudent vehemence, than to the ambition of our neighbours.

In the *second* place, we are so declared in our opposition to French power, and so alert in defence of our allies, that they always reckon upon our force as upon their own; and expecting to carry on war at our expense, refuse all reasonable terms of accommodation. *Habent subjectos, tanquam suos; viles, ut alicnos.* All the world knows, that the factious vote of the House of Commons, in the beginning of the last Parliament, with the professed humour of the nation, made the Queen of Hungary inflexible in her terms, and prevented that agreement with Prussia, which would immediately have restored the general tranquillity of Europe.

In the *third* place, we are such true combatants, that, when once engaged, we lose all concern for ourselves and our posterity, and consider only how we may best annoy the enemy. To mortgage our revenues at so deep a rate in wars where we are only accessories, was surely the most fatal delusion that a nation, which had any pretension to politics and prudence, has ever yet been guilty of. That remedy of funding, if it be a remedy, and not rather a poison, ought, in all reason, to be reserved to the last extremity; and no evil, but the greatest and most urgent, should ever induce us to embrace so dangerous an expedient.

These excesses, to which we have been carried, are prejudicial, and may, perhaps, in time, become still more prejudicial another way, by begetting, as is usual, the opposite extreme, and rendering us

totally careless and supine with regard to the fate of Europe. The Athenians, from the most bustling, intriguing, warlike, people of Greece, finding their error in thrusting themselves into every quarrel, abandoned all attention to foreign affairs; and in no contest ever took part on either side, except by their flatteries and complaisance to the victor.

*Enormous monarchies* are probably destructive to human nature in their progress, in their continuance,<sup>1</sup> and even in their downfall, which never can be very distant from their establishment. The military genius which aggrandized the monarchy, soon leaves the court, the capital, and the centre of such a government, while the wars are carried on at a great distance, and interest so small a part of the state. The ancient nobility, whose affections attach them to their sovereign, live all at court, and never will accept of military employments, which would carry them to remote and barbarous frontiers, where they are distant both from their pleasures and their fortune. The arms of the state must therefore be intrusted to mercenary strangers, without zeal, without attachment, without honour, ready on every occasion to turn them against the prince, and join each desperate malcontent who offers pay and plunder. Thus is the necessary progress of human affairs. Thus human nature checks itself in its very elevation, thus ambition blindly labours for the destruction of the conqueror, of his family, and of every thing near and dear to him. The Bourbons, trusting to the support of their brave, faithful, and affectionate nobility, would push their advantage without reserve or limitation. These, while fired with glory and emulation, can bear the fatigues and dangers of war, but never would submit to languish in the garrisons of Hungary or Luthuania,

<sup>1</sup> If the Roman empire was of advantage, it could only proceed from this that mankind were generally in a very disorderly, uncivilized condition before its establishment.

forgot at court, and sacrificed to the intrigues of every minion or mistress who approaches the prince. The troops are filled with Cravates and Tartars, Hussars and Cossacks, intermingled, perhaps, with a few soldiers of fortune from the better provinces ; and the melancholy fate of the Roman emperors, from the same cause, is renewed over and over again, till the final dissolution of the monarchy.

## ESSAY VIII OF TAXES

There is a prevailing maxim among some statesmen, *That every new tax creates a new ability in the subject to bear it, and that each increase of public burdens increases proportionally the industry of the people.* This maxim is of such a nature, as is most likely to be abused, and is so much the more dangerous, as its truth cannot be altogether denied; but it must be owned, when kept within certain bounds, to have some foundation in reason and experience.

When a tax is laid upon commodities which are consumed by the common people, the necessary consequence may seem to be, either that the poor must retrench something from their way of living, or raise their wages, so as to make the burden of the tax fall entirely upon the rich. But there is a third consequence which often follows upon taxes, namely, that the poor increase their industry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour. Where taxes are moderate, are laid on gradually, and affect not the necessities of life, this consequence naturally follows; and it is certain, that such difficulties often serve to excite the industry of a people, and render them more opulent and laborious than others, who enjoy the greatest advantages, for we may observe as a parallel instance, that the most commercial nations have not always possessed the greatest extent of fertile land, but, on the contrary, that they have laboured under

many natural disadvantages. Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Rhodes, Genoa, Venice, Holland, are strong examples to this purpose; and in all history, we find only three instances of large and fertile countries which have possessed much trade, the Netherlands, England, and France. The two former seem to have been allured by the advantages of their maritime situation. and the necessity they lay under of frequenting foreign ports, in order to procure what their own climate refused them; and as to France, trade has come late into that kingdom, and seems to have been the effect of reflection and observation in an ingenious and enterprising people, who remarked the riches acquired by such of the neighbouring nations as cultivated navigation and commerce.

The places mentioned by Cicero, as possessed of the greatest commerce in his time, are Alexandria, Colehus, Tyre, Sidon, Andros, Cyprus, Pamphylia, Lycia, Rhodes, Chios, Byzantium, Lesbos, Smyrna, Miletus, Coos. All these, except Alexandria, were either small islands, or narrow territories; and that city owed its trade entirely to the happiness of its situation.

Since, therefore, some natural necessities or disadvantages may be thought favourable to industry, why may not artificial burdens have the same effect? Sir William Temple,<sup>1</sup> we may observe, ascribes the industry of the Dutch entirely to necessity, proceeding from their natural disadvantages; and illustrates his doctrine by a striking comparison with Ireland, "where," says he, "by the largeness and plenty of the soil, and searcity of people, all things necessary to life are so cheap, that an industrious man, by two days' labour, may gain enough to feed him the rest of the week; which I take to be a very plain ground of the laziness attributed to the people; for men naturally prefer ease before labour, and will not

<sup>1</sup> Account of the Netherlands, chap. 6.

take pains if they can live idle; though when, by necessity, they have been inured to it, they cannot leave it, being grown a custom necessary to their health, and to their very entertainment. Nor perhaps is the change harder, from constant ease to labour, than from constant labour to ease." After which the author proceeds to confirm his doctrine, by enumerating, as above, the places where trade has most flourished in ancient and modern times, and which are commonly observed to be such narrow confined territories, as beget a necessity for industry.<sup>1</sup>

The best taxes are such as are levied upon consumptions, especially tho' of luxury, because such taxes are least felt by the people. They seem in some measure voluntary, since a man may choose how far he will use the commodity which is taxed. They are paid gradually and insensibly; they naturally produce sobriety and frugality, if judiciously imposed, and being confounded with the natural

<sup>1</sup> It is always observed in years of scarcity, if it be not extreme, that the poor labour more and really live better, than in years of great plenty, when they indulge themselves in idleness and riot. I have been told, by a considerable manufacturer that in the year 1710 when bread and provisions of all kinds were very dear, his workmen not only made a shift to live, but paid debts which they had contracted in former years that were much more favourable and abundant.

This doctrine therefore, with regard to taxes, may be admitted in some degree, but beware of the abuse. Taxes like necessity, when carried too far, destroy industry, by engendering despair, and even before they reach this pitch they raise the wages of the labourer and manufacturer and heighten the price of all commodities. An attentive disinterested legislature will observe this point when the emolument ceases, and the prejudice begins, but as the contrary character is much more common, it is to be feared that taxes all over Europe are multiplying to such a degree as will entirely crush all art and industry, though perhaps their past increase, along with other circumstances, might contribute to the growth of these advantages.



price of the commodity, they are scarcely perceived by the consumers. Their only disadvantage is, that they are expensive in the levying.

Taxes upon possessions are levied without expense, but have every other disadvantage. Most states, however, are obliged to have recourse to them, in order to supply the deficiencies of the other.

But the most pernicious of all taxes are the arbitrary. They are commonly converted, by their management, into punishments on industry; and also, by their unavoidable inequality, are more grievous, than by the real burden which they impose. It is surprising, therefore, to see them have place among any civilized people.

In general, all poll-taxes, even when not arbitrary, which they commonly are, may be esteemed dangerous: because it is so easy for the sovereign to add a little more, and a little more, to the sum demanded, that these taxes are apt to become altogether oppressive and intolerable. On the other hand, a duty upon commodities checks itself; and a prince will soon find, that an increase of the impost is no increase of his revenue. It is not easy, therefore, for a people to be altogether ruined by such taxes.

Historians inform us, that one of the chief causes of the destruction of the Roman state, was the alteration which Constantine introduced into the finances, by substituting an universal poll-tax, in lieu of almost all the tithes, customs, and excises, which formerly composed the revenue of the *empire*. The people, in all the provinces, were so grinded and oppressed by the *publicans*, that they were glad to take refuge under the conquering arms of the barbarians, whose dominion, as they had fewer necessities and less art, was found preferable to the refined tyranny of the Romans.

It is an opinion, zealously promoted by some political writers, that, since all taxes, as they

present, fall ultimately upon him. It were better to  
 lay them originally there and abolish every duty  
 upon consumption. But it is denied that all taxes  
 fall ultimately upon him. If a duty be laid upon  
 any commodity consumed by an artisan, he has two  
 obvious expedients for paying it. He may retrench  
 somewhat of his expense, or he may increase his  
 labour. Both these resources are more easy and  
 natural than that of heightening his wages. We  
 see, that, in years of scarcity, the weaver either  
 consumes less or labours more, or employs both  
 these expedients of frugality and industry, by which  
 he is enabled to reach the end of the year. It is  
 but just that he should subject himself to the same  
 hardships, if they deserve the name, for the sake of  
 the public which gives him protection. By what  
 contrivance can he raise the price of his labour?  
 The manufacturer who employs him will not give  
 him more. neither can he, because the merchant  
 who exports the cloth cannot raise its price being  
 limited by the price which it yields in foreign  
 markets. Every man to be sure is desirous of  
 pushing off from himself the burden of any tax  
 which is imposed, and of laying it upon others.  
 But as every man has the same inclination, and is  
 upon the defensive, no set of men can be supposed  
 to prevail altogether in this contest. And why the  
 Janitor gentleman should be the victim of the whole  
 and should not be able to defend himself as well  
 as others are, I cannot readily imagine. All trades-  
 men indeed, would willingly prey upon him, and  
 divide him among them, if they could. But this  
 inclination they always have though no taxes were  
 levied, and the same methods by which he guards  
 against the imposition of tradesmen before taxes  
 will serve him afterwards, and make them share the  
 burden with him. They must be very heavy taxes,  
 indeed, and very injudiciously levied, which the  
 artisan will not, of himself, be enabled to pay by

superior industry and frugality, without raising the price of his labour.

I shall conclude this subject with observing, that we have, with regard to taxes, an instance of what frequently happens in political institutions, that the consequences of things are diametrically opposite to what we should expect on the first appearance. It is regarded as a fundamental maxim of the Turkish government, that the *Grand Seignior*, though absolute master of the lives and fortunes of each individual, has no authority to impose a new tax: and every Ottoman prince, who has made such an attempt, either has been obliged to retract, or has found the fatal effects of his perseverance. One would imagine, that this prejudice or established opinion were the firmest barrier in the world against oppression: yet it is certain that its effect is quite contrary. The emperor, having no regular method of increasing his revenue, must allow all the bashaws and governors to oppress and abuse the subjects; and these he squeezes after their return from their government. Whereas, if he could impose a new tax, like our European princes, his interest would so far be united with that of his people, that he would immediately feel the bad effects of these disorderly levies of money, and would find, that a pound, raised by a general imposition, would have less pernicious effects than a shilling taken in so unequal and arbitrary a manner.

## ESSAY IX

### OF PUBLIC CREDIT

It appears to have been the common practice of antiquity, to make provision, during peace, for the necessities of war, and to hoard up treasures beforehand as the instruments either of conquest or defence; without trusting to extraordinary impositions, much less to borrowing in times of disorder and confusion. Besides the immense sums above mentioned, which were amassed by Athens, and by the Ptolemies, and other successors of Alexander; we learn from Plato, that the frugal Lacedæmonians had also collected a great treasure; and Arrian and Plutarch take notice of the riches which Alexander got possession of on the conquest of Susa and Ecbatana, and which were reserved, some of them, from the time of Cyrus. If I remember right, the Scripture also mentions the treasure of Hezekiah and the Jewish princes; as profane history does that of Philip and Perseus, kings of Macedon. The ancient republics of Gaul had commonly large sums in reserve. Every one knows the treasure seized in Rome by Julius Cæsar, during the civil wars: and we find afterwards, that the wiser emperors, Augustus, Tiberius, Vespasian, Severus, etc. always discovered the prudent foresight of saving great sums against any public exigency.

On the contrary, our modern expedient, which has become very general, is to mortgage the public revenues, and to trust that posterity will pay off

the incumbrances contracted by their ancestors : and they, having before their eyes so good an example of their wise fathers, have the same prudent reliance on *their* posterity ; who, at last, from necessity more than choice, are obliged to place the same confidence in a new posterity. But not to waste time in declaiming against a practice which appears ruinous beyond all controversy, it seems pretty apparent, that the ancient maxims are, in this respect, more prudent than the modern ; even though the latter had been confined within some reasonable bounds, and had ever, in any instance, been attended with such frugality, in time of peace, as to discharge the debts incurred by an expensive war. For why should the case be so different between the public and an individual, as to make us establish different maxims of conduct for each ? If the funds of the former be greater, its necessary expenses are proportionably larger ; if its resources be more numerous, they are not infinite ; and as its frame should be calculated for a much longer duration than the date of a single life, or even of a family, it should embrace maxims, large, durable, and generous, agreeably to the supposed extent of its existence. To trust to chances and temporary expedients, is, indeed, what the necessity of human affairs frequently renders unavoidable ; but whoever voluntarily depend on such resources, have not necessity, but their own folly to accuse for their misfortunes, when any such befall them.

If the abuses of treasures be dangerous, either by engaging the state in rash enterprises, or making it neglect military discipline, in confidence of its riches ; the abuses of mortgaging are more certain and inevitable ; poverty, impotence, and subjection to foreign powers.

According to the modern policy, war is attended with every destructive circumstance ; loss of men, increase of taxes, decay of commerce, dissipation



nor need a trader, who has sums in the public stocks, fear to launch out into the most extensive trade; since he is possessed of funds which will answer the most sudden demand that can be made upon him. No merchant thinks it necessary to keep by him any considerable cash. Bank stock, or India bonds, especially the latter, serve all the same purposes; because he can dispose of them, or pledge them to a banker, in a quarter of an hour; and at the same time they are not idle, even when in his scrutoire, but bring him in a constant revenue. In short our national debts furnish merchants with a species of money that is continually multiplying in their hands, and produces sure gain, besides the profits of their commerce. This must enable them to trade upon less profit. The small profit of the merchant renders the commodity cheaper, causes a greater consumption, quickens the labour of the common people, and helps to spread arts and industry throughout the whole society.

There are also, we may observe, in England and in all states which have both commerce and public debts, a set of men, who are half merchants, half stockholders, and may be supposed willing to trade for small profits; because commerce is not their principal or sole support, and their revenues in the funds are a sure resource for themselves and their families. Were there no funds, great merchants would have no expedient for realizing or securing any part of their profit, but by making purchases of land; and land has many disadvantages in comparison of funds. Requiring more care and inspection, it divides the time and attention of the merchant: upon any tempting offer or extraordinary accident in trade, it is not so easily converted into money; and as it attracts too much, both by the many natural pleasures it affords, and the authority it gives, it soon converts the citizen into the country gentleman. More men, therefore, with large stocks

and incomes, may naturally be supposed to continue in trade, where there are public debts; and this, it must be owned, is of some advantage to commerce, by diminishing its profits, promoting circulation, and encouraging industry.

But, in opposition to these two favourable circumstances, perhaps of no very great importance, weigh the many disadvantages which attend our public debts in the whole *interior* economy of the state: you will find no comparison between the ill and the good which result from them.

*First*, It is certain that national debts cause a mighty confluence of people and riches to the capital, by the great sums levied in the provinces to pay the interest, and perhaps, too, by the advantages in trade above mentioned, which they give the merchants in the capital above the rest of the kingdom. The question is, Whether, in our case, it be for the public interest that so many privileges should be conferred on London, which has already arrived at such an enormous size, and seems still increasing? Some men are apprehensive of the consequences. For my own part, I cannot forbear thinking, that, though the head is undoubtedly too large for the body, yet that great city is so happily situated, that its excessive bulk causes less inconvenience than even a smaller capital to a greater kingdom. There is more difference between the prices of all provisions in Paris and Languedoc, than between those in London and Yorkshire. The immense greatness, indeed, of London, under a government which admits not of discretionary power, renders the people factious, mutinous, seditious, and even perhaps rebellious. But to this evil the national debts themselves tend to provide a remedy. The first visible eruption, or even immediate danger of public disorders, must alarm all the stockholders, whose property is the most precarious of any; and will make them fly to



the support of government, whether menaced by Jacobitish violence, or democratical frenzy.

*Secondly*, Public stocks, being a kind of paper-credit, have all the disadvantages attending that species of money. They banish gold and silver from the most considerable commerce of the state, reduce them to common circulation, and by that means render all provisions and labour dearer than otherwise they would be.<sup>1</sup>

*Thirdly*, The taxes which are levied to pay the interest of these debts are apt either to heighten the price of labour, or to be an oppression on the poorer sort.

*Fourthly*, As foreigners possess a great share of our national funds, they render the public in a manner tributary to them, and may in time occasion the transport of our people and our industry.

*Fifthly*, The greater part of the public stock being always in the hands of idle people, who live on their revenue, our funds, in that view, give great encouragement to an useless and inactive life.

But though the injury that arises to commerce and industry from our public funds will appear, upon balancing the whole, not inconsiderable, it is trivial in comparison of the prejudice that results to a state considered as a body politic, which must support itself in the society of nations, and have various transactions with other states in wars and negotiations. The ill there is pure and unmixed, without any favourable circumstance to atone for

<sup>1</sup> We may also remark, that this increase of prices, derived from paper-credit, has a more durable and a more dangerous influence than when it arises from a great increase of gold and silver: where an accidental overflow of money raises the price of labour and commodities, the evil remedies itself in a little time. The money soon flows out into all the neighbouring nations: the prices fall to a level: and industry may be continued as before; a relief which cannot be expected where the circulating specie consists chiefly of paper, and has no intrinsic value.

it; and it is an ill too of a nature the highest and most important.

We have indeed been told, that the public is no weaker on account of its debts, since they are mostly due among ourselves, and bring as much property to one as they take from another. It is like transferring money from the right hand to the left, which leaves the person neither richer nor poorer than before. Such loose reasoning and specious comparisons will always pass where we judge not upon principles. I ask, Is it possible, in the nature of things, to overburden a nation with taxes, even where the sovereign resides among them? The very doubt seems extravagant, since it is requisite, in every community, that there be a certain proportion observed between the laborious and the idle part of it. But if all our present taxes be mortgaged, must we not invent new ones? And may not this matter be carried to a length that is ruinous and destructive?

In every nation there are always some methods of levying money more easy than others, agreeably to the way of living of the people, and the commodities they make use of. In Great Britain, the excises upon malt and beer afford a large revenue, because the operations of malting and brewing are tedious, and are impossible to be concealed; and, at the same time, these commodities are not so absolutely necessary to life as that the raising of their price would very much affect the poorer sort. These taxes being all mortgaged, what difficulty to find new ones! what vexation and ruin of the poor!

Duties upon consumptions are more equal and easy than those upon possessions. What a loss to the public that the former are all exhausted, and that we must have recourse to the more grievous method of levying taxes!

Were all the proprietors of land only stewards to

the public, must not necessity force them to practise all the arts of oppression used by stewards, where the absence or negligence of the proprietor render them secure against injury?

It will scarcely be asserted, that no bounds ought ever to be set to national debts, and that the public would be no weaker were twelve or fifteen shillings in the pound, land-tax, mortgaged, with all the present customs and excises. There is something, therefore, in the case, beside the mere transferring of property from the one hand to another. In five hundred years, the posterity of those now in the coaches, and of those upon the boxes, will probably have changed places, without affecting the public by these revolutions.

Suppose the public once fairly brought to that condition to which it is hastening with such amazing rapidity; suppose the land to be taxed eighteen or nineteen shillings in the pound, for it can never bear the whole twenty; suppose all the excises and customs to be screwed up to the utmost which the nation can bear, without entirely losing its commerce and industry; and suppose that all those funds are mortgaged to perpetuity, and that the invention and wit of all our projectors can find no new imposition which may serve as the foundation of a new loan; and let us consider the necessary consequences of this situation. Though the imperfect state of our political knowledge, and the narrow capacities of men, make it difficult to fortell the effects which will result from any untried measure, the seeds of ruin are here scattered with such profusion as not to escape the eye of the most careless observer.

In this unnatural state of society, the only persons who possess any revenue beyond the immediate effects of their industry, are the stockholders, who draw almost all the rent of the land and houses, besides the produce of all the customs and excises.

These are men who have no connections with the state, who can enjoy their revenue in any part of the globe in which they chuse to reside, who will naturally bury themselves in the capital, or in great cities, and who will sink into the lethargy of a stupid and pampered luxury, without spirit, ambition, or enjoyment. Alien to all ideas of nobility, gentry, and family. The stocks can be transferred in an instant, and, being in such a fluctuating state, will seldom be transmitted during three generations from father to son. Or were they to remain ever so long in one family, they convey no hereditary authority or credit to the possessor, and by this means the several ranks of men, which form a kind of independent magistracy in a state, instituted by the hand of nature, are entirely lost, and every man in authority derives his influence from the commission alone of the sovereign. No expedient remains for preventing or suppressing insurrections but mercenary armies: no expedient at all remains for resisting tyranny: elections are swayed by bribery and corruption alone: and the middle power between king and people being totally removed, a grievous despotism must infallibly prevail. The landholders despised for their poverty, and hated for their oppressions, will be utterly unable to make any opposition to it.

Though a resolution should be formed by the legislature never to impose any tax which hurts commerce and discourages industry, it will be impossible for men, in subjects of such extreme delicacy, to reason so justly as never to be mistaken, or, amidst difficulties so urgent, never to be seduced from their resolution. The continual fluctuations in commerce require continual alterations in the nature of the taxes which exposes the legislature every moment to the danger both of wilful and involuntary error. And any great blow given to trade, whether by judicious taxes or by other

accidents, throws the whole system of government into confusion.

But what expedient can the public now employ, even supposing trade to continue in the most flourishing condition, in order to support its foreign wars and enterprises, and to defend its own honour and interest, or those of its allies? I do not ask how the public is to exert such a prodigious power as it has maintained during our late wars; where we have so much exceeded, not only our own natural strength, but even that of the greatest empires. This extravagance is the abuse complained of, as the source of all the dangers to which we are at present exposed. But since we must still suppose great commerce and opulence to remain, even after every fund is mortgaged; these riches must be defended by proportional power; and whence is the public to derive the revenue which supports it? It must plainly be from a continual taxation of the annuitants, or, which is the same thing, from mortgaging anew, on every exigency, a certain part of their annuities; and thus making them contribute to their own defence, and to that of the nation. But the difficulties attending this system of policy will easily appear, whether we suppose the king to have become absolute master, or to be still controlled by national councils, in which the annuitants themselves must necessarily bear the principal sway.

If the prince has become absolute, as may naturally be expected from this situation of affairs, it is so easy for him to increase his exactions upon the annuitants, which amount only to the retaining of money in his own hands, that this species of property would soon lose all its credit, and the whole income of every individual in the state must lie entirely at the mercy of the sovereign; a degree of despotism which no oriental monarchy has ever yet attained. If, on the contrary, the consent of the annuitants be requisite for every taxation, they will

never be persuaded to contribute sufficiently even to the support of government, as the diminution of their revenue must in that case be very sensible: it would not be disguised under the appearance of a branch of excise or customs, and would not be shared by any other order of the state, who are already supposed to be taxed to the utmost. There are instances, in some republics, of a hundredth penny, and sometimes of the fiftieth, being given to the support of the state, but this is always an extraordinary exertion of power, and can never become the foundation of a constant national defence. We have always found, where a government has mortgaged all its revenues, that it necessarily sinks into a state of languor, inactivity, and impotence.

Such are the inconveniences which may reasonably be foreseen of this situation to which Great Britain is visibly tending. Not to mention the numberless inconveniences, which cannot be foreseen, and which must result from so monstrous a situation as that of making the public the chief or sole proprietor of land, besides investing it with every branch of customs and excise, which the fertile imagination of ministers and projectors have been able to invent.

I must confess that there has a strange supineness, from long custom, crept into all ranks of men, with regard to public debts, not unlike what divines so vehemently complain of with regard to their religious doctrines. No one owns that the most sanguine imagination cannot hope, either that this or any future ministry will be possessed of such rigid and steady frugality, as to make a considerable progress in the payment of our debts, or that the situation of foreign affairs will, for any long time, allow them leisure and tranquillity for such an undertaking.<sup>1</sup> *What then is to become of us? Were*

<sup>1</sup> In times of peace and security, when alone it is possible to pay debt, the moneyed interest are averse to receive partial

we ever so good Christians, and ever so resigned to Providence ; this, methinks, were a curious question, even considered as a speculative one, and what it might not be altogether impossible to form some conjectural solution of. The events here will depend little upon the contingencies of battles, negotiations, intrigues, and factions. There seems to be a natural progress of things which may guide our reasoning. As it would have required but a moderate share of prudence, when we first began this practice of mortgaging, to have foretold, from the nature of men and of ministers, that things would necessarily be carried to the length we see ; so now, that they have at last happily reached it, it may not be difficult to guess at the consequences. It must, indeed, be one of these two events ; either the nation must destroy public credit, or public credit will destroy the nation. It is impossible that they can both subsist, after the manner they have been hitherto managed, in this, as well as in some other countries.

There was, indeed, a scheme for the payment of our debts, which was proposed by an excellent citizen, Mr. Hutchinson, about thirty years ago, and which was much approved of by some men of sense, but never was likely to take effect. He asserted that there was a fallacy in imagining that the public owed this debt ; for that really every individual owed a proportional share of it, and paid, in

payments, which they know not how to dispose of to advantage ; and the landed interest are averse to continue the taxes requisite for that purpose. Why therefore should a minister persevere in a measure so disagreeable to all parties ? For the sake, I suppose, of a posterity which he will never see, or of a few reasonable reflecting people, whose united interest perhaps will not be able to secure him the smallest borough in England. It is not likely we shall ever find any minister so bad a politician. With regard to these narrow destructive maxims of politics, all ministers are expert enough.

his taxes, a proportional share of the interest, beside the expense of levying these taxes. Had we not better, then, says he, make a distribution of the debt among ourselves, and each of us contribute a sum suitable to his property, and by that means discharge at once all our funds and public mortgages? He seems not to have considered that the laborious poor pay a considerable part of the taxes by their annual consumptions, though they could not advance, at once, a proportional part of the sum required. Not to mention, that property in money and stock in trade might easily be concealed or disguised; and that visible property in lands and houses would really at last answer for the whole; an inequality and oppression which never would be submitted to. But though this project is not likely to take place, it is not altogether improbable, that when the nation becomes heartily sick of their debts, and is cruelly oppressed by them, some daring projector may arise with visionary schemes for their discharge. And as public credit will begin, by that time, to be a little frail, the least touch will destroy it, as happened in France during the regency; and in this manner it will die of the doctor.<sup>1</sup>

But it is more probable, that the breach of

<sup>1</sup> "Some neighbouring states practice an easy expedient, by which they lighten their public debts. The French have a custom (as the Romans formerly had) of augmenting their money; and thus the nation has been so much familiarized to, that it hurts not public credit, though it be really cutting off at once, by an edict, so much of their debts. The Dutch diminish the interest without the consent of their creditors, or, which is the same thing, they arbitrarily tax the funds, as well as other property. Could we practise either of these methods, we need never be oppressed by the national debt; and it is not impossible but one of these, or some other method, may, at all adventures, be tried on the augmentation of our incumbrances and difficulties. But people in this country are so good reasoners upon whatever regards their interests, that such a practice will deceive nobody; and public credit will probably tremble at once, by so dangerous a trial."



national faith will be the necessary effect of wars, defeats, misfortunes, and public calamities, or even perhaps of victories and conquests. I must confess when I see princes and states fighting and quarrelling, amidst their debts, funds, and public mortgages, it always brings to my mind a match of cudgel-playing fought in a China shop. How can it be expected, that sovereigns will spare a species of property, which is pernicious to themselves and to the public, when they have so little compassion on lives and properties that are useful to both? Let the time come (and surely it will come) when the new funds, created for the exigencies of the year, are not subscribed to, and raise not the money projected. Suppose either that the cash of the nation is exhausted; or that our faith, which has hitherto been so ample, begins to fail us. Suppose that, in this distress, the nation is threatened with an invasion; a rebellion is suspected or broken out at home; a squadron cannot be equipped for want of pay, victuals, or repairs; or even a foreign subsidy cannot be advanced. What must a prince or minister do in such an emergence? The right of self-preservation is unalienable in every individual, much more in every community. And the folly of our statesmen must then be greater than the folly of those who first contracted debt; or what is more, than that of those who trusted, or continue to trust this security, if these statesmen have the means of safety in their hands, and do not employ them. The funds, created and mortgaged, will by that time bring in a large yearly revenue, sufficient for the defence and security of the nation: money is perhaps lying in the exchequer, ready for the discharge of the quarterly interest: necessity calls, fear urges, reason exhorts, compassion alone exclaims: the money will immediately be seized for the current service, under the most solemn protestations, perhaps of being immediately replaced.

But no more is requisite. The whole fabric, already tottering, falls to the ground, and buries thousands in its ruins. And thus I think, may be called the *natural death* of public credit, for to this period it tends as naturally as an animal body to its dissolution and destruction.

So great dupes are the generality of mankind, that notwithstanding such a violent shock to public credit, as a voluntary bankruptcy in England would occasion, it would not probably be long ere credit would again revive in as flourishing a condition as before. The present king of France, during the late war, borrowed money at a lower interest than ever his grandfather did, and as low as the British Parliament, comparing the natural rate of interest in both kingdoms. And though men are commonly more governed by what they have seen, than by what they foresee, with whatever certainty, yet promises, protestations, fair appearances, with the allurements of present interest, have such powerful influence as few are able to resist. Mankind are, in all ages, caught by the same baits: the same tricks played over and over again, still trepan them. The heights of popularity and patriotism are still the beaten road to power and tyranny, flattery, to treachery, standing armies to arbitrary government, and the glory of God to the temporal interest of the clergy. The fear of an everlasting destruction of credit, allowing it to be an evil, is a needless bugbear. A prudent man, in reality, would rather lend to the public immediately after we had taken a sponge to our debts, than at present, as much as an opulent private, even though one could not force him to pay, is a preferable debtor to an honest bankrupt. For the former, in order to carry on business, may find it his interest to discharge his debts, where they are not exorbitant: the latter has it not in his power. The reasoning of *facitote*, as it is eternally true, is very applicable to our present case. *Sed vulgus ad*

*magnitudinem beneficiorum adcrat: stultissimus quisque pecuniis mercabatur: apud sapientes cassa habebantur, quæ neque dari neque accipi, salva republica, poterant.* The public is a debtor, whom no man can oblige to pay. The only check which the creditors have upon her, is the interest of preserving credit; an interest which may easily be overbalanced by a great debt, and by a difficult and extraordinary emergence, even supposing that credit irrecoverable. Not to mention, that a present necessity often forces states into measures, which are, strictly speaking, against their interest.

These two events supposed above, are calamitous, but not the most calamitous. Thousands are thereby sacrificed to the safety of millions. But we are not without danger, that the contrary event may take place, and that millions may be sacrificed for ever to the temporary safety of thousands.<sup>1</sup> Our popular government, perhaps, will render it difficult or dangerous for a minister to venture on so desperate an expedient as that of a voluntary bankruptcy. And though the House of Lords be altogether composed of proprietors of land, and the House of Commons chiefly; and consequently neither of them

<sup>1</sup> I have heard it has been computed, that all the creditors of the public, natives and foreigners, amount only to 17,000. These make a figure at present on their income; but, in case of a public bankruptcy, would, in an instant, become the lowest, as well as the most wretched of the people. The dignity and authority of the landed gentry and nobility is much better rooted, and would render the contention very unequal, if ever we come to that extremity. One would incline to assign to this event a very near period, such as half a century, had not our fathers' prophecies of this kind been already found fallacious, by the duration of our public credit so much beyond all reasonable expectation. When the astrologers in France were every year foretelling the death of Henry IV., "These fellows," says he, "must be right at last." We shall, therefore, be more cautious than to assign any precise date; and shall content ourselves with pointing out the event in general.

can be supposed to have great property in the funds, yet the connections of the members may be so great with the proprietors, as to render them more tenacious of public faith than prudence, policy, or even justice, strictly speaking, requires. And perhaps, too, our foreign enemies may be so politic as to discover, that our safety lies in despair, and may not therefore show the danger, open and barefaced, till it be inevitable. The balance of power in Europe, our grandfathers, our fathers, and we, have all deemed too unequal to be preserved without our attention and assistance. But our children, weary of the struggle, and fettered with incumbrances, may sit down secure, and see their neighbours oppressed and conquered, till, at last, they themselves and their creditors be both at the mercy of the conqueror. And this may properly enough be denominated the violent death of our public credit.

These seem to be the events, which are not very remote, and which reason foresees as clearly almost as she can do any thing that lies in the womb of time. And though the ancients maintained, that in order to reach the gift of prophecy, a certain divine fury or madness was requisite, one may safely affirm, that in order to deliver such prophecies as these, no more is necessary than merely to be in one's senses, free from the influence of popular madness and delusion.

## ESSAY X

### OF SOME REMARKABLE CUSTOMS

I SHALL observe three remarkable customs in three celebrated governments; and shall conclude from the whole, that all general maxims in politics ought to be established with great caution; and that irregular and extraordinary appearances are frequently discovered in the moral, as well as in the physical world. The former, perhaps, we can better account for after they happen, from springs and principles, of which every one has, within himself, or from observation, the strongest assurance and conviction: but it is often fully as impossible for human prudence, beforehand, to foresee and foretell them.

I. One would think it essential to every supreme council or assembly which debates, that entire liberty of speech should be granted to every member, and that all motions or reasonings should be received, which can any way tend to illustrate the point under deliberation. One would conclude, with still greater assurance, that after a motion was made, which was voted and approved by that assembly in which the legislative power is lodged, the member who made the motion must for ever be exempted from future trial or inquiry. But no political maxim can, at first sight, appear more indisputable, than that he must, at least, be secured from all inferior jurisdiction; and that nothing less than the same supreme legislative assembly in their subsequent meetings,



After the battle of Charonea, a law was passed upon the motion of Hyperides, giving liberty to slaves, and enrolling them in the troops. On account of this law, the orator was afterwards tried by the indictment above mentioned, and defended himself, among other topics, by that stroke celebrated by Plutarch and Longinus. *It was not I,* said he, *that moved for this law: it was the necessities of war; it was the battle of Charonea.* The orations of Demosthenes abound with many instances of trials of this nature, and prove clearly, that nothing was more commonly practised.

The Athenian Democracy was such a tumultuous government as we can scarcely form a notion of in the present age of the world. The whole collective body of the people voted in every law, without any limitation of property, without any distinction of rank, without control from any magistracy or senate;<sup>1</sup> and consequently without regard to order, justice, or prudence. The Athenians soon became sensible of the mischiefs attending this constitution: but being averse to checking themselves by any rule or restriction, they resolved, at least to check their demagogues or counsellors, by the fear of future punishment and inquiry. They accordingly instituted this remarkable law, a law esteemed so essential to their form of government, that Æschines insisted on it as a known truth, that were it abolished or neglected, it were impossible for the Democracy to subsist.

The people feared not any ill consequence to liberty from the authority of the criminal courts, because these were nothing but very numerous juries, chosen by lot from among the people. And they justly considered themselves as in a state of perpetual pupilage, where they had an authority,

<sup>1</sup> The senate of the Bean was only a less numerous mob, chosen by lot from among the people, and their authority was not great.





and yet produced no clashing in these independent powers, the supposition may appear incredible. And if, to augment the paradox, I should affirm, that this disjointed, irregular government, was the most active, triumphant, and illustrious commonwealth that ever yet appeared ; I should certainly be told, that such a political chimera was as absurd as any vision of priests or poets. But there is no need for searching long, in order to prove the reality of the foregoing suppositions : for this was actually the case with the Roman republic.

The legislative power was there lodged in the *comitia centuriata* and *comitia tributa*. In the former, it is well known, the people voted according to their *census*, so that when the first class was unanimous, though it contained not perhaps the hundredth part of the commonwealth, it determined the whole ; and, with the authority of the senate, established a law. In the latter every vote was equal ; and as the authority of the senate was not there requisite, the lower people entirely prevailed, and gave law to the whole state. In all party divisions, at first between the Patricians and Plebeians, afterwards between the nobles and the people, the interest of the aristocracy was predominant in the first legislature, that of the democracy in the second : the one could always destroy what the other had established : nay, the one by a sudden and unforeseen motion, might take the start of the other, and totally annihilate its rival by a vote, which, from the nature of the constitution, had the full authority of a law. But no such contest is observed in the history of Rome : no instance of a quarrel between these two legislatures, though many between the parties that governed in each. Whence arose this concord, which may seem so extraordinary ?

The legislature established in Rome, by the authority of Servius Tullius, was the *comitia centuriata*, which, after the expulsion of the kings,

rendered the government for some time very aristocratical. But the people, having numbers and force on their side, and being elated with frequent conquests and victories in their foreign wars, always prevailed when pushed to extremity, and first extorted from the senate the magistracies of the tribunes, and next the legislative power of the *comitia tributa*. It then behoved the nobles to be more careful than ever not to provoke the people. For beside the force which the latter were always possessed of, they had now got possession of legal authority, and could instantly break in pieces any order or institution which directly opposed them. By intrigue, by influence, by money, by combination, and by the respect paid to their character, the nobles might often prevail, and direct the whole machine of government. But had they openly set their *comitia centuriata* in opposition to the *tributa*, they had soon lost the advantage of that institution, together with their consuls, prætors, ediles, and all the magistrates elected by it. But the *comitia tributa*, not having the same reason for respecting the *centuriata*, frequently repealed laws favourable to the aristocracy. They limited the authority of the nobles, protected the people from oppression, and controlled the actions of the senate and magistracy. The *centuriata* found it convenient always to submit, and though equal in authority, yet being inferior in power, durst never directly give any shock to the other legislature, either by repealing its laws, or establishing laws which it foresaw would soon be repealed by it.

No instance is found of any opposition or struggle between these *comitia*, except one slight attempt of this kind, mentioned by Appian in the third book of his Civil Wars. Mark Antony, resolving to deprive Decimus Brutus of the government of Cisalpine Gaul, ruled in the *Forum*, and called out of the *comitia*, in order to prevent the meeting of

the other, which had been ordered by the senate. But affairs were then fallen into such confusion, and the Roman constitution was so near its final dissolution, that no inference can be drawn from such an expedient. This contest, besides, was founded more on form than party. It was the senate who ordered the *comitia tributa*, that they might obstruct the meeting of the *centuriata*, which, by the constitution, or at least forms of the government, could alone dispose of provinces.

Cicero was recalled by the *comitia centuriata*, though banished by the *tributa*, that is, by a *plebiscitum*. But his banishment, we may observe, never was considered as a legal deed, arising from the free choice and inclination of the people. It was always ascribed to the violence alone of Clodius, and to the disorders introduced by him into the government.

III. The *third* custom which we purpose to remark regards England, and, though it be not so important as those which we have pointed out in Athens and Rome, is no less singular and unexpected. It is a maxim in politics, which we readily admit as undisputed and universal, that a power, however great, when granted by law to an eminent magistrate, is not so dangerous to liberty as an authority, however inconsiderable, which he acquires from violence and usurpation. For besides that the law always limits every power which it bestows, the very receiving it as a concession establishes the authority whence it is derived, and preserves the harmony of the constitution. By the same right that one prerogative is assumed without law, another may also be claimed, and another, with still greater facility; while the first usurpations both serve as precedents to the following, and give force to maintain them. Hence the heroism of Hampden's conduct, who sustained the whole violence of royal prosecution, rather than pay a tax of twenty shillings not

imposed by Parliament; hence the care of all English patriots to guard against the first encroachments of the crown; and hence alone the existence, at this day, of English liberty.

There is, however, one occasion when the Parliament has departed from this maxim; and that is, in the *pressing of seamen*. The exercise of an irregular power is here tacitly permitted in the crown; and though it has frequently been under deliberation how that power might be rendered legal, and granted, under proper restrictions, to the sovereign, no safe expedient could ever be proposed for that purpose, and the danger to liberty always appeared greater from law than from usurpation. When this power is exercised to no other end than to man the navy, men willingly submit to it from a sense of its use and necessity; and the sailors, who are alone affected by it, find nobody to support them in claiming the rights and privileges which the law grants, without distinction, to all English subjects. But were this power, on any occasion, made an instrument of faction or ministerial tyranny, the opposite faction, and indeed all lovers of their country, would immediately take the alarm and support the injured party; the liberty of Englishmen would be asserted; juries would be implacable, and the tools of tyranny, acting both against law and equity, would meet with the severest vengeance. On the other hand, were the Parliament to grant such an authority, they would probably fall into one of these two inconveniences. They would either bestow it under so many restrictions as would make it lose its effect, by cramping the authority of the crown, or they would render it so large and comprehensive as might give occasion to great abuses, for which we could, in that case, have no remedy. The very irregularity of the practice at present prevents its abuses, by affording so easy a remedy against them.

I pretend not, by this reasoning, to exclude all

possibility of contriving a register for seamen, which might man the navy without being dangerous to liberty. I only observe, that no satisfactory scheme of that nature has yet been proposed. Rather than adopt any project hitherto invented, we continue a practice seemingly the most absurd and unaccountable. Authority, in times of full internal peace and concord, is armed against law. A continued violence is permitted in the crown, amidst the greatest jealousy and watchfulness in the people; nay, proceeding from those very principles. Liberty, in a country of the highest liberty, is left entirely to its own defence, without any countenance or protection. The wild state of nature is renewed in one of the most civilized societies of mankind, and great violence and disorder are committed with impunity; while the one party pleads obedience to the supreme magistrate, the other the sanction of fundamental laws.

## ESSAY XI

### OF THE POPULOUSNESS OF ANCIENT NATIONS

There is very little ground, either from reason or observation, to conclude the world eternal or incorruptible. The continual and rapid motion of matter, the violent revolutions with which every part is agitated, the changes remarked in the heavens, the plain traces as well as traditions of an universal deluge, or general convulsion of the elements, all these prove strongly the mortality of this fabric of the world, and its passage, by corruption or dissolution, from one state or order to another. It must therefore, as well as each individual form which it contains, have its infancy, youth, manhood, and old age, and it is probable, that, in all these variations man, equally with every animal and vegetable, will partake. In the flourishing age of the world it may be expected, that the human species should possess greater vigour both of mind and body, more prosperous health, higher spirits, longer life, and a stronger inclination and power of generation. But if the general system of things, and human society of course, have any such gradual revolutions they are too slow to be discernible in that short period which is comprehended by history and tradition. Stature and force of body, length of life, even courage and extent of genius, seem hitherto to have been naturally, in all ages pretty much the same. The arts and sciences, indeed, have flourished

one period, and have decayed in another; but we may observe, that at the time when they rose to greatest perfection among one people, they were perhaps totally unknown to all the neighbouring nations; and though they universally decayed in one age, yet in a succeeding generation they again revived, and diffused themselves over the world. As far, therefore, as observation reaches, there is no universal difference discernible in the human species; and though it were allowed, that the universe, like an animal body, had a natural progress from infancy to old age, yet as it must still be uncertain, whether, at present, it be advancing to its point of perfection, or declining from it, we cannot thence presuppose any decay in human nature.<sup>1</sup> To prove, therefore, or account for that superior populousness of antiquity, which is commonly supposed, by the imaginary youth or vigour of the world, will scarcely be admitted by any just reasoner. These *general physical* causes ought entirely to be excluded from this question.

There are indeed some more *particular physical* causes of importance. Diseases are mentioned in antiquity, which are almost unknown to modern medicine; and new diseases have arisen and propagated themselves, of which there are no traces in ancient history. In this particular we may observe, upon comparison, that the disadvantage is much on the side of the moderns. Not to mention some others of less moment, the smallpox commits such

<sup>1</sup> Columella says, lib. iii. cap. 8., that in Egypt and Africa the bearing of twins was frequent, and even customary; *gemini partus familiares, ac pæne solennes sunt*. If this was true, there is a physical difference both in countries and ages. For travellers make no such remarks on these countries at present. On the contrary, we are apt to suppose the northern nations more prolific. As those two countries were provinces of the Roman empire, it is difficult, though not altogether absurd, to suppose that such a man as Columella might be mistaken with regard to them.

ravages, as would almost alone account for the great superiority ascribed to ancient times. The tenth or the twelfth part of mankind destroyed, every generation should make a vast difference, it may be thought, in the numbers of the people, and when joined to venereal distempers, a new plague diffused everywhere, this disease is perhaps equivalent, by its constant operation to the three great scourges of mankind, war, pestilence, and famine. Were it certain, therefore, that ancient times were more populous than the present, and could no moral causes be assigned for so great a change, these physical causes alone, in the opinion of many, would be sufficient to give us satisfaction on that head.

But is it certain that antiquity was so much more populous, as is pretended? The extravagances of Vossius, with regard to this subject, are well known. But an author of much greater genius and discernment has ventured to affirm, that according to the best computations which these subjects will admit of there are not now, on the face of the earth, the fiftieth part of mankind, which existed in the time of Julius Cæsar. It may easily be observed, that the comparison in this case must be imperfect, even though we confine ourselves to the scene of ancient history, Europe, and the nations round the Mediterranean. We know not exactly the numbers of any European kingdom, or even city, at present: how can we pretend to calculate those of ancient cities and states, where historians have left us such imperfect traces? For my part, the matter appears to me so uncertain, that, as I intend to throw together some reflections on that head, I shall intermingle the inquiry concerning *causes* with that concerning *facts*, which ought never to be admitted, where the facts can be ascertained with any tolerable assurance. We shall, *first*, consider whether it be probable, from what we know of the situation of society in both periods, that antiquity





like reason, every wise, just, and mild government, by rendering the condition of its subjects easy and secure, will always abound most in people, as well as in commodities and riches. A country, indeed, whose climate and soil are fitted for vines, will naturally be more populous than one which produces corn only, and that more populous than one which is only fitted for pasturage. In general, warm climates, as the necessities of the inhabitants are there fewer, and vegetation more powerful, are likely to be most populous. But if every thing else be equal, it seems natural to expect that, wherever there are most happiness and virtue, and the wisest institutions, there will also be most people.

The question, therefore, concerning the populousness of ancient and modern times, being allowed of great importance, it will be requisite, if we would bring it to some determination, to compare both the *domestic* and *political* situation of these two periods, in order to judge of the facts by their moral causes, which is the *first* view in which we proposed to consider them.

The chief difference between the *domestic* economy of the ancients and that of the moderns, consists in the practice of slavery, which prevailed among the former, and which has been abolished for some centuries throughout the greater part of Europe. Some passionate admirers of the ancients, and zealous partisans of *civil liberty*, (for these sentiments, as they are both of them in the main extremely just, are found to be almost inseparable,) cannot forbear regretting the loss of this institution; and whilst they brand all submission to the government of a single person with the harsh denomination of slavery, they would gladly reduce the greater part of mankind to real slavery and subjection. But to one who considers coolly on the subject, it will appear that human nature, in general, really enjoys more liberty at

present, in the most arbitrary government of Europe, than it ever did during the most flourishing period of ancient times. As much as submission to a petty prince, whose dominions extend not beyond a single city, is more grievous than obedience to a great monarch; so much is domestic slavery more cruel and oppressive than any civil subjection whatsoever. The more the master is removed from us in place and rank, the greater liberty we enjoy, the less are our actions inspected and controlled, and the fainter that cruel comparison becomes between our own subjection, and the freedom, and even dominion of another. The remains which are found of domestic slavery, in the American colonies, and among some European nations, would never surely create a desire of rendering it more universal. The little humanity commonly observed in persons accustomed, from their infancy, to exercise so great authority over their fellow-creatures, and to trample upon human nature, were sufficient alone to disgust us with that unbounded dominion. Nor can a more probable reason be assigned for the severe, I might say, barbarous manners of ancient times, than the practice of domestic slavery; by which every man of rank was rendered a petty tyrant, and educated amidst the flattery, submission, and low debasement of his slaves.

According to ancient practice, all checks were on the inferior, to restrain him to the duty of submission; none on the superior, to engage him to the reciprocal duties of gentleness and humanity. In modern times, a bad servant finds not easily a good master, nor a bad master a good servant; and the checks are mutual, suitably to the inviolable and eternal laws of reason and equity.

The custom of exposing old, useless, or sick slaves in an island of the Tiber, there to starve, seems to have been pretty common in Rome; and

whoever recovered, after having been so exposed, had his liberty given him by an edict of the Emperor Claudius, in which it was likewise forbidden to kill any slave merely for old age or sickness. But supposing that this edict was strictly obeyed, would it better the domestic treatment of slaves, or render their lives much more comfortable? We may imagine what others would practice, when it was the professed maxim of the elder Cato, to sell his superannuated slaves for any price, rather than maintain what he esteemed a useless burden.

The *ergastula*, or dungeons, where slaves in chains were forced to work, were very common all over Italy. Columella advises, that they be always built underground, and recommends it as the duty of a careful overseer, to call over every day the names of these slaves, like the mustering of a regiment or ship's company, in order to know presently when any of them had deserted, a proof of the frequency of these *ergastula*, and of the greater number of slaves usually confined in them.

A chained slave for a porter was usual in Rome, as appears from Ovid, and other authors. Had not these people shaken off all sense of compassion towards that unhappy part of their species, would they have presented their friends, at the first entrance, with such an image of the severity of the master and misery of the slave?

Nothing so common in all trials, even of civil causes, as to call for the evidence of slaves; which was always extorted by the most exquisite torments. Demosthenes says, that, where it was possible to produce, for the same fact, either freemen or slaves, as witnesses, the judges always preferred the torturing of slaves as a more certain evidence.

Seneca draws a picture of that disorderly luxury which changes day into night, and night into day, and inverts every stated hour of every office in life. Among other circumstances, such as displacing the



that supply the place of those whom age and infirmity have disabled. He encourages, therefore, their propagation as much as that of his cattle, rears the young with the same care, and educates them to some art or calling which may render them more useful or valuable to him. The opulent are, by this policy, interested in the being at least, though not in the well being, of the poor, and enrich themselves by increasing the number and industry of those who are subjected to them. Each man, being a sovereign in his own family, has the same interest with regard to it as the prince with regard to the state and has not, like the prince, any opposite motives of ambition or vanity, which may lead him to depopulate his little sovereignty. All of it is, at all times, under his eye; and he has leisure to inspect the most minute detail of the marriage and education of his subjects.<sup>1</sup>

Such are the consequences of domestic slavery, according to the first aspect and appearance of things: but if we enter more deeply into the subject, we shall perhaps find reason to retract our hasty determinations. The comparison is shocking between the management of human creatures and that of cattle, but being extremely just, when applied to the present subject, it may be proper to trace the consequences of it. At the capital, near all great cities, in all populous, rich, industrious provinces, few cattle are bred. Provisions, lodging, attendance, labour, are there dear; and men find their account better in buying the cattle, after they come to a certain stage, from the remoter and

<sup>1</sup> We may here observe, that if domestic slavery really increased populousness it would be an exception to the general rule, that the happiness of any society and its populousness are necessary attendants. A master, from humour or interest, may make his slaves very unhappy, yet be careful, from interest, to increase their number. Their marriage is not a matter of choice with them, more than any other action of their life.

cheaper countries. These are consequently the only breeding countries for cattle ; and, by a parity of reason, for men too, when the latter are put on the same footing with the former. To rear a child in London till he could be serviceable, would cost much dearer than to buy one of the same age from Scotland or Ireland, where he had been bred in a cottage, covered with rags, and fed on oatmeal or potatoes. Those who had slaves, therefore, in all the richer and more populous countries, would discourage the pregnancy of the females, and either prevent or destroy the birth. The human species would perish in those places where it ought to increase the fastest, and a perpetual recruit be wanted from the poorer and more desert provinces. Such a continued drain would tend mightily to depopulate the state, and render great cities ten times more destructive than with us ; where every man is master of himself, and provides for his children from the powerful instinct of nature, not the calculations of sordid interest. If London at present, without much increasing, needs a yearly recruit from the country of 5,000 people, as is usually computed, what must it require if the greater part of the tradesmen and common people were slaves, and were hindered from breeding by their avaricious masters ?

All ancient authors tell us, that there was a perpetual flux of slaves to Italy, from the remoter provinces, particularly Syria, Cilicia, Cappadocia, and the Lesser Asia, Thrace, and Egypt : yet the number of people did not increase in Italy ; and writers complain of the continual decay of industry and agriculture. Where then is that extreme fertility of the Roman slaves, which is commonly supposed ? So far from multiplying, they could not, it seems, so much as keep up the stock without immense recruits. And though great numbers were continually manumitted and converted into Roman

citizens, the numbers even of these did not increase, till the freedom of the city was communicated to foreign provinces.

The term for a slave, born and bred in the family, was *verna*;¹ and these slaves seem to have been entitled by custom to privileges and indulgences beyond others; a sufficient reason why the masters would not be fond of rearing many of that kind. Whoever is acquainted with the maxims of our planters, will acknowledge the justness of this observation.²

¹ *Is servus* was the name of the genus and *verna* of the species, without any correlative this forms a strong presumption, that the latter were by far the least numerous. It is an universal observation which we may form upon language, that where two related parts of a whole bear any proportion to each other, in numbers rank or consideration, there are always correlative terms invented, which answer to both the parts, and express their mutual relation. If they bear no proportion to each other the term is only invented for the less, and marks its distinction *fr* in the whole. Thus *man* and *woman*, *master* and *servant*, *father* and *son*, *prince* and *subject*, *stranger* and *citizen*, are correlative terms. But the words *seaman*, *carpenter*, *smith*, *tailor*, etc., have no correspondent terms which express those which are no seamen, no carpenters, etc. Languages differ very much with regard to the particular words where this distinction obtains, and may thence afford very strong inferences concerning the manners and customs of different nations. The military government of the Roman emperors had exalted the soldiers so high, that they balanced all the other orders of the state. Hence *miles* and *paganus* became relative terms, a thing, till then, unknown to ancient, and still so to modern languages. Modern superstition exalted the clergy so high, that they overbalanced the whole state. Hence the *clergy* and *laity* are terms opposed in all modern languages, and in these alone. And from the same principles I infer, that if the number of slaves bought by the Romans from foreign countries had not extremely exceeded those which were bred at home, *verna* would have had a correlative, which would have expressed the former species of slaves. But these, it would seem, composed the main body of the ancient slaves, and the latter were but a few exceptions.

² It is computed in the West Indies, that a stock of slaves



Attians is much praised by his historian for the care which he took in recruiting his family from the slaves born in it. May we not thence infer, that this practice was not then very common?

The names of slaves in the Greek comedies, SYRUS, MYRUS, GETA, THRAX, DAVUS, LYDUS, PHRYX, etc., afford a presumption, that, at Athens at least, most of the slaves were imported from foreign countries. The Athenians, says Strabo, gave to their slaves either the names of the nations whence they were bought, as LYDUS, SYRUS, or the names that were most common among those nations, as MANES or MINAS to a Phrygian, TIBIAS to a Paphlagonian.

Demosthenes, having mentioned a law which forbade any man to strike the slave of another, praises the humanity of this law; and adds, that if the barbarians, from whom the slaves were bought, had information that their countrymen met with such gentle treatment, they would entertain a great esteem for the Athenians. Isocrates, too, insinuates that the slaves of the Greeks were generally or very commonly barbarians. Aristotle in his politics, plainly supposes, that a slave is always a foreigner. The ancient comic writers represented the slaves as speaking a barbarous language. This was an imitation of nature.

grow worse *five per cent.* every year, unless new slaves be brought to recruit them. They are not able to keep up their number, even in those warm countries, where clothes and provisions are so easily got. How much more must this happen in European countries, and in or near great cities? I shall add, that, from the experience of our planters, slavery is as little advantageous to the master as to the slave, wherever hired servants can be procured. A man is obliged to clothe and feed his slaves; and he does no more for his servant: the price of the first purchase is, therefore, so much loss to him; not to mention, that the fear of punishment will never draw so much labour from a slave, as the dread of being turned off, and not getting another service, will from a freeman.

It is well known that Demosthenes, in his nonage, had been defrauded of a large fortune by his tutors, and that afterwards he recovered, by a prosecution at law, the value of his patrimony. His orations, on that occasion, still remain, and contain in exact detail of the whole substance left by his father, in money, merchandise, houses, and slaves, together with the value of each particular. Among the rest were 52 slaves, handicraftsmen, namely, 32 sword cutlers, and 20 cabinet-makers, all males, not a word of any wives, children or family, which they certainly would have had, had it been a common practice at Athens to breed from the slaves, and the value of the whole must have much depended on that circumstance. No female slaves are even so much as mentioned, except some housemaids, who belonged to his mother. This argument has great force, if it be not altogether conclusive.

Consider this passage of Plutarch, speaking of the Elder Cato. "He had a great number of slaves, whom he took care to buy at the sales of prisoners of war, and he chose them young, that they might easily be accustomed to any diet or manner of life, and be instructed in any business or labour, as men teach any thing to young dogs or horses. And esteeming love the chief source of all disorders, he allowed the male slaves to have a commerce with the female in his family, upon paying a certain sum for this privilege but he strictly prohibited all intrigues out of his family. Are there any symptoms in this narration of that care which is supposed in the ancients of the marriage and propagation of their slaves? If that was a common practice founded on general interest, it would surely have been embraced by Cato, who was a great economist, and lived in times when the ancient frugality and simplicity of manners were still in credit and reputation.

It is expressly remarked by the writers of the

Roman law, that scarcely any ever purchased slaves with a view of breeding from them.

Our lackeys and housemaids, I own, do not serve much to multiply their species: but the ancients, besides those who attended on their person, had almost all their labour performed, and even manufactures executed by slaves, who lived, many of them, in their family; and some great men possessed to the number of 10,000. If there be any suspicion, therefore, that this institution was unfavourable to propagation (and the same reason, at least in part, holds with regard to ancient slaves as modern servants), how destructive must slavery have proved!

History mentions a Roman nobleman who had 400 slaves under the same roof with him: and having been assassinated at home by the furious revenge of one of them, the law was executed with rigour, and all without exception were put to death. Many other Roman noblemen had families equally, or more numerous; and I believe every one will allow, that this would scarcely be practicable, were we to suppose all the slaves married, and the females to be breeders.

So early as the poet Hesiod, married slaves, whether male or female, were esteemed inconvenient. How much more, where families had increased to such an enormous size as in Rome, and where the ancient simplicity of manners was banished from all ranks of people!

Xenophon in his *Oeconomies*, where he gives directions for the management of a farm, recommends a strict care and attention of laying the male and the female slaves at a distance from each other. He seems not to suppose that they are ever married. The only slaves among the Greeks that appear to have continued their own race, were the *Holotes*, who had houses apart, and were more the slaves of the public than of individuals.

The same author tells us, that *Nicias* an overseer, by agreement with his master, was obliged to pay him an obolus a day for each slave, besides maintaining them and keeping up the number. Had the ancient slaves been all breeders, this last circumstance of the contract had been superfluous.

The ancients talk so frequently of a fixed, stated portion of provisions assigned to each slave, that we are naturally led to conclude, that slaves lived almost all single, and received that portion as a kind of board wages.

The practice, indeed, of marrying slaves, seems not to have been very common, even among the country labourers, where it is more naturally to be expected. Cato, enumerating the slaves requisite to labour a vineyard of a hundred acres, makes them amount to 15, the overseer and his wife, *villicus* and *villica*, and 13 male slaves, for an olive plantation of 210 acres, the overseer and his wife, and 11 male slaves, and so in proportion to a greater or less plantation or vineyard.

Varro, quoting this passage of Cato, allows his computation to be just in every respect except the last. For as it is requisite, says he, to have an overseer and his wife, whether the vineyard or plantation be great or small, this must alter the exactness of the proportion. Had Cato's computation been erroneous in any other respect, it had certainly been corrected by Varro, who seems fond of discovering so trivial an error.

The same author, as well as Columella, recommends it as requisite to give a wife to the overseer, in order to attach him the more strongly to his master's service. This was therefore a peculiar indulgence granted to a slave, in whom so great confidence was reposed.

In the same place, Varro mentions it as an useful precaution, not to buy too many slaves from the same nation, lest they beget factions and seditious

in the family ; a presumption, that in Italy the greater part even of the country slaves (for he speaks of no other) were bought from the remoter provinces. All the world knows, that the family slaves in Rome, who were instruments of show and luxury, were commonly imported from the East. *Hoc profecere*, says Pliny, speaking of the jealous care of masters, *mancipiorum legiones, et in domo turba externa ac servorum quoque causa nomenclator adhibendus.*

It is indeed recommended by Varro to propagate young shepherds in the family from the old ones. For as grazing farms were commonly in remote and cheap places, and each shepherd lived in a cottage apart, his marriage and increase were not liable to the same inconvenience as in dearer places, and where many servants lived in the family, which was universally the case in such of the Roman farms as produced wine or corn. If we consider this exception with regard to shepherds, and weigh the reasons of it, it will serve for a strong confirmation of all our foregoing suspicions.

Columella, I own, advises the master to give a reward, and even liberty to a female slave, that had reared him above three children ; a proof that sometimes the ancients propagated from their slaves, which indeed cannot be denied. Were it otherwise, the practice of slavery, being so common in antiquity, must have been destructive to a degree which no expedient could repair. All I pretend to infer from these reasonings is, that slavery is in general disadvantageous both to the happiness and populousness of mankind, and that its place is much better supplied by the practice of hired servants.

The laws, or, as some writers call them, the seditions of the Gracchi, were occasioned by their observing the increase of slaves all over Italy, and the diminution of free citizens. Appian ascribes this

increase to the propagation of the slaves. Plutarch to the purchasing of barbarians, who were chained and imprisoned, *σπάρματα δεσμευτῶν α.* It is to be presumed that both causes concurred.

Sicily, says Horus, was full of *ergastula*, and was cultivated by labourers in chains. Junus and Atheno excited the servile war, by breaking up these monstrous prisons, and giving liberty to 60,000 slaves. The younger Pompey augmented his army in Spain by the same expedient. If the country labourers throughout the Roman empire were so generally in this situation, and if it was difficult or impossible to find separate lodgings for the families of the city servants, how unfavourable to propagation, as well as to humanity, must the institution of domestic slavery be esteemed?

Constantinople, at present, requires the same recruits of slaves from all the provinces that Rome did of old, and these provinces are of consequence far from being populous.

Egypt, according to Mons. Maillet, sends continual colonies of black slaves to the other parts of the Turkish empire, and receives annually an equal return of white. The one brought from the inland parts of Africa, the other from Mingrelia, Circassia, and Tartary.

Our modern convents are, no doubt, bad institutions. but there is reason to suspect, that anciently every great family in Italy, and probably in other parts of the world, was a species of convent. And though we have reason to condemn all those Popish institutions as nurseries of superstition, burdensome to the public, and oppressive to the poor prisoners male as well as female, yet may it be questioned whether they be so destructive to the populousness of a state, as is commonly imagined. Were the land which belongs to a convent bestowed on a nobleman, he would spend its revenue on dogs, horses, grooms, footmen, cooks, and housemaids,

and his family would not furnish many more citizens than the convent.

The common reason why any parent thrusts his daughters into nunneries, is, that he may not be overburdened with too numerous a family ; but the ancients had a method almost as innocent, and more effectual to that purpose, to wit, exposing their children in early infancy. This practice was very common, and is not spoken of by any author of those times with the horror it deserves, or scarcely even with disapprobation. Plutarch, the humane good-natured Plutarch, mentions it as a merit in Attalus, king of Pergamus, that he murdered, or, if you will, exposed all his own children, in order to leave his crown to the son of his brother Eumenes ; signaling in this manner his gratitude and affection to Eumenes, who had left him his heir, preferably to that son. It was Solon, the most celebrated of the sages of Greece, that gave parents permission by law to kill their children.

Shall we then allow these two circumstances to compensate each other, to wit, monastic vows and the exposing of children, and to be unfavourable, in equal degrees, to the propagation of mankind ? I doubt the advantage is here on the side of antiquity. Perhaps, by an odd connection of causes, the barbarous practice of the ancients might rather render those times more populous. By removing the terrors of too numerous a family, it would engage many people in marriage ; and such is the force of natural affection, that very few, in comparison, would have resolution enough, when it came to the push, to carry into execution their former intentions.

China, the only country where this practice of exposing children prevails at present, is the most populous country we know of, and every man is married before he is twenty. Such early marriages could scarcely be general, had not men the prospect

of so easy a method of getting rid of their children. I own that Plutarch speaks of it as a very general maxim of the poor to expose their children; and as the rich were then averse to marriage, on account of the courtship they met with from those who expected legacies from them, the public must have been in a bad situation between them.<sup>1</sup>

Of all sciences, there is none where first appearances are more deceitful than in politics. Hospitals for foundlings seem favourable to the increase of numbers, and perhaps may be so, when kept under proper restrictions. But when they open the door to every one without distinction, they have probably a contrary effect, and are pernicious to the state. It is computed, that every ninth child born in Paris is sent to the hospital; though it seems certain, according to the common course of human affairs, that it is not a hundredth child whose parents are altogether unsuspected to rear and educate him. The great difference, for health, industry, and morals, between an education in an hospital and that in a private family, should induce us not to make the entrance into the former too easy and engaging. To kill one's own child is shocking to nature, and must therefore be somewhat unusual; but to turn over the care of him upon

<sup>1</sup> The practice of leaving great sums of money to friends, though one had near relations, was common in Greece as well as Rome, as we may gather from Lucian. This practice prevails much less in modern times; and Ben Jonson's *Volpone* is therefore almost entirely extracted from ancient authors, and suits better the manners of those times.

It may justly be thought, that the liberty of divorce in Rome was another discouragement to marriage. Such a practice prevents not quarrels from *honour*, but rather increases them; and occasions also those from *interest*, which are much more dangerous and destructive. See further on this head, Part I. Essay XVIII. Perhaps, too, the unnatural lusts of the ancients ought to be taken into consideration as of some moment.



others, is very tempting to the natural indolence of mankind.

Having considered the domestic life and manners of the ancients, compared to those of the moderns, where, in the main, we seem rather superior, so far as the present question is concerned, we shall now examine the *political* customs and institutions of both ages, and weigh their influence in retarding or forwarding the propagation of mankind.

Before the increase of the Roman power, or rather till its full establishment, almost all the nations, which are the scene of ancient history, were divided into small territories or petty commonwealths, where of course a great equality of fortune prevailed ; and the centre of the government was always very near its frontiers.

This was the situation of affairs not only in Greece and Italy, but also in Spain, Gaul, Germany, Africa, and a great part of the Lesser Asia : and it must be owned, that no institution could be more favourable to the propagation of mankind. For though a man of an overgrown fortune, not being able to consume more than another, must share it with those who serve and attend him, yet their possession being precarious, they have not the same encouragement to marry as if each had a small fortune, secure and independent. Enormous cities are, besides, destructive to society, beget vice and disorder of all kinds, starve the remoter provinces, and even starve themselves, by the prices to which they raise all provisions. Where each man had his little house and field to himself, and each county had its capital, free and independent, what a happy situation of mankind ! how favourable to industry and agriculture, to marriage and propagation ! The prolific virtue of men, were it to act in its full extent, without that restraint which poverty and necessity impose on it, would double the number every generation : and nothing surely can give it

more liberty than such small commonwealths, and such an equality of fortune among the citizens. All small states naturally produce equality of fortune, because they afford no opportunities of great increase; but small commonwealths much more, by that division of power and authority which is essential to them.

When Xenophon returned after the famous expedition with Cyrus, he hired himself and 6,000 of the Greeks into the service of Sentiæ, a prince of Thrace, and the articles of his agreement were, that each soldier should receive a *denar* a month, each captain two *denars*, and he himself, as general, four, a regulation of pay which would not a little surprise our modern officers.

Demosthenes and Aeschines, with eight more, were sent ambassadors to Philip of Macedon, and their appointments for above four months were a thousand *drachmæ*, which is less than a *drachma* a day for each ambassador. But a *drachma* a day, nay, sometimes two, was the pay of a common foot soldier.

A centurion among the Romans had only double pay to a private man in Polybius's time, and we accordingly find the gratuities after a triumph regulated by that proportion. But Mark Antony and the triumvirate gave the centurions five times the reward of the other, so much had the increase of the commonwealth increased the inequality among the citizens.

It must be owned, that the situation of affairs in modern times, with regard to civil liberty, as well as equality of fortune, is not near so favourable either to the propagation or happiness of mankind. Europe is shared out mostly into great monarchies, and such parts of it as are divided into small territories are commonly governed by absolute princes, who ruin their people by a mimicry of the great monarchs, in the splendour of their court, and

number of their forces. Switzerland alone, and Holland, resembles the ancient republics; and though the former is far from possessing any advantage, either of soil, climate, or commerce, yet the numbers of people with which it abounds, notwithstanding their enlisting themselves into every service in Europe, prove sufficiently the advantages of their political institutions.

The ancient republics derived their chief or only security from the numbers of their citizens. The Trachinians having lost great numbers of their people, the remainder, instead of enriching themselves by the inheritance of their fellow-citizens, applied to Sparta, their metropolis, for a new stock of inhabitants. The Spartans immediately collected ten thousand men, among whom the old citizens divided the lands of which the former proprietors had perished.

After Timoleon had banished Dionysius from Syracuse, and had settled the affairs of Sicily, finding the cities of Syracuse and Selinuntum extremely depopulated by tyranny, war, and faction, he invited over from Greece some new inhabitants to repopulate them. Immediately forty thousand men (Plutarch says sixty thousand) offered themselves; and he distributed so many lots of land among them, to the great satisfaction of the ancient inhabitants; a proof at once of the maxims of ancient policy, which affected populousness more than riches, and of the good effects of these maxims, in the extreme populousness of that small country, Greece, which could at once supply so great a colony. The case was not much different with the Romans in early times. He is a pernicious citizen, said M'. Curius, who cannot be content with seven acres. Such ideas of equality could not fail of producing great numbers of people.

We must now consider what disadvantages the ancients lay under with regard to populousness,

and what checks they received from their political maxims and institutions. There are commonly compensations in every human condition; and though these compensations be not always perfectly equal, yet they serve, at least, to restrain the prevailing principle. To compare them, and estimate their influence, is indeed difficult, even where they take place in the same age, and in neighbouring countries. But where several ages have intervened, and only scattered lights are afforded us by ancient authors, what can we do but amuse ourselves by talking *pro* and *con* on an interesting subject, and thereby correcting all hasty and violent determinations?

*First*, We may observe, that the ancient republics were almost in perpetual war, a natural effect of their martial spirit, their love of liberty, their mutual emulation, and that hatred which generally prevails among nations that live in close neighbourhood. Now, war in a small state is much more destructive than in a great one, both because all the inhabitants, in the former case, must serve in the armies, and because the whole state is frontier, and is all exposed to the incursions of the enemy.

The maxims of ancient war were much more destructive than those of modern, chiefly by that distribution of plunder, in which the soldiers were indulged. The private men in our armies are such a low set of people, that we find any abundance, beyond their simple pay, breeds confusion and disorder among them, and a total dissolution of discipline. The very wretchedness and meanness of those who fill the modern armies, render them less destructive to the countries which they invade; one instance, among many, of the deceitfulness of first appearances in all political reasonings.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The ancient soldiers, being free citizens above the lowest rank, were all married. Our modern soldiers are either forced to live unmarried, or their marriages turn to small

Ancient battles were much more bloody, by the very nature of the weapons employed in them. The ancients drew up their men sixteen or twenty, sometimes fifty men deep, which made a narrow front; and it was not difficult to find a field, in which both armies might be marshalled, and might engage with each other. Even where any body of the troops was kept off by hedges, hillocks, woods, or hollow ways, the battle was not so soon decided between the contending parties, but that the others had time to overcome the difficulties which opposed them, and take part in the engagement. And as the whole army was thus engaged, and each man closely buckled to his antagonist, the battles were commonly very bloody, and great slaughter was made on both sides, especially on the vanquished. The long thin lines, required by fire-arms, and the quick decision of the fray, render our modern engagements but partial rencounters, and enable the general, who is foiled in the beginning of the day, to draw off the greater part of his army, sound and entire.

The battles of antiquity, both by their duration and their resemblance to single combats, were wrought up to a degree of fury quite unknown to later ages. Nothing could then engage the combatants to give quarter, but the hopes of profit, by making slaves of their prisoners. In civil wars, as we learn from Tacitus, the battles were the most bloody, because the prisoners were not slaves.

What a stout resistance must be made, where the vanquished expected so hard a fate! How inveterate the rage, where the maxims of war were, in every respect, so bloody and severe!

Instances are frequent, in ancient history, of cities besieged, whose inhabitants, rather than open account towards the increase of mankind; a circumstance which ought, perhaps, to be taken into consideration, as of some consequence in favour of the ancients.

their gates, murdered their wives and children, and rushed themselves on a voluntary death, sweetened perhaps by a little prospect of revenge upon the enemy. Greeks, as well as barbarians, have often been wrought up to this degree of fury. And the same determined spirit and cruelty must, in other instances less remarkable, have been destructive to human society, in those petty commonwealths which lived in close neighbourhood, and were engaged in perpetual wars and contentions.

Sometimes the wars in Greece, says Plutarch, were carried on entirely by inroads, and robberies, and piracies. Such a method of war must be more destructive in small states, than the bloodiest battles and sieges.

By the laws of the twelve tables, possession during two years formed a prescription for land; one year for movables; an indication, that there was not in Italy, at that time, much more order, tranquillity, and settled police, than there is at present among the Tartars.

The only cartel I remember in ancient history, is that between Demetrius Poliorcetes and the Rhodians; when it was agreed, that a free citizen should be restored for 1,000 drachmas, a slave bearing arms for 200.

But, *secondly*, It appears that ancient manners were more unfavourable than the modern, not only in times of war, but also in those of peace; and that too in every respect, except the love of civil liberty and of equality, which is, I own, of considerable importance. To exclude faction from a free government, is very difficult, if not altogether impracticable; but such inveterate rage between the factions, and such bloody maxims are found, in modern times, amongst religious parties alone. In ancient history we may always observe, where one party prevailed, whether the nobles or people (for I can observe no difference in this respect), that they immediately

butchered all of the opposite party who fell into their hands, and banished such as had been so fortunate as to escape their fury. No form of process, no law, no trial, no pardon. A fourth, a third, perhaps near half of the city was slaughtered, or expelled, every revolution; and the exiles always joined foreign enemies, and did all the mischief possible to their fellow-citizens, till fortune put it in their power to take full revenge by a new revolution. And as these were frequent in such violent governments, the disorder, diffidence, jealousy, enmity, which must prevail, are not easy for us to imagine in this age of the world.

There are only two revolutions I can recollect in ancient history, which passed without great severity, and great effusion of blood in massacres and assassinations, namely, the restoration of the Athenian Democracy by Thrasybulus, and the subduing of the Roman Republic by Cæsar. We learn from ancient history, that Thrasybulus passed a general amnesty for all past offences; and first introduced that word, as well as practice, into Greece. It appears, however, from many orations of Lysias, that the chief, and even some of the subaltern offenders, in the preceding tyranny, were tried and capitally punished. And as to Cæsar's clemency, though much celebrated, it would not gain great applause in the present age. He butchered, for instance, all Cato's senate, when he became master of Utica; and these, we may readily believe, were not the most worthless of the party. All those who had borne arms against that usurper were attainted, and by Hirtius's law declared incapable of all public offices.

These people were extremely fond of liberty, but seem not to have understood it very well. When the thirty tyrants first established their dominion at Athens, they began with seizing all the sycophants and informers, who had been so troublesome during the democracy, and putting them to death by an

arbitrary sentence and execution. Every man, says Sallust and Lylius, *rejoiced at these punishments*, not considering that liberty was from that moment annihilated.

The utmost energy of the nervous style of Thucydides, and the copiousness and expression of the Greek language, seem to sink under that historian, when he attempts to describe the disorders which arose from faction throughout all the Grecian commonwealths. You would imagine that he still labours with a thought greater than he can find words to communicate. And he concludes his pathetic description with an observation, which is at once refined and solid. "In these contests," says he, "those who were the dullest and most stupid, and had the least foresight, commonly prevailed. For being conscious of this weakness, and dreading to be overreached by those of greater penetration, they went to work hastily, without premeditation, by the sword and poniard, and thereby got the start of their antagonists, who were forming fine schemes and projects for their destruction."<sup>1</sup>

Not to mention Dionysius the elder, who is computed to have butchered in cold blood above 10,000 of his fellow-citizens, or Agathocles, Nabis, and others, still more bloody than he, the transactions, even in free governments, were extremely violent and destructive. At Athens, the thirty tyrants and

<sup>1</sup> "Lib. 3.—The country in Europe wherein I have observed the factions to be most violent, and party hatred the strongest, is Ireland. This goes so far as to cut off even the most common intercourse of civilities betwixt the Protestants and Catholics. Their cruel insurrections, and the severe revenges which they have taken of each other, are the causes of this mutual ill will, which is the chief source of disorder, poverty, and depopulation, in that country. The Greek factions I imagine to have been inflamed still to a higher degree of rage, the revolutions being commonly more frequent, and the means of assassination much more avowed and acknowledged."



the nobles, in a twelvemonth, murdered without trial, about 1,200 of the people, and banished above the half of the citizens that remained. In Argos, near the same time, the people killed 1,200 of the nobles; and afterwards their own demagogues, because they had refused to carry their prosecutions further. The people also in Corcyra killed 1,500 of the nobles, and banished a thousand. These numbers will appear the more surprising, if we consider the extreme smallness of these states; but all ancient history is full of such circumstances.

When Alexander ordered all the exiles to be restored throughout all the cities, it was found, that the whole amounted to 20,000 men; the remains probably of still greater slaughters and massacres. What an astonishing multitude in so narrow a country as ancient Greece! And what domestic confusion, jealousy, partiality, revenge, heart-burnings, must have torn those cities, where factions were wrought up to such a degree of fury and despair!

It would be easier, says Isocrates to Philip, to raise an army in Greece at present from the vagabonds than from the cities.

Even when affairs came not to such extremities (which they failed not to do almost in every city twice or thrice every century), property was rendered very precarious by the maxims of ancient government. Xenophon, in the Banquet of Socrates, gives us a natural unaffected description of the tyranny of the Athenian people. "In my poverty," says Charmides, "I am much more happy than I ever was while possessed of riches: as much as it is happier to be in security than in terrors, free than a slave, to receive than to pay court, to be trusted than suspected. Formerly I was obliged to caress every informer; some imposition was continually laid upon me; and it was never allowed me to travel, or be absent from the city. At present, when I am poor, I look big, and threaten others.

The rich are afraid of me, and shew me every kind of civility and respect, and I am become a kind of tyrant in the city.

In one of the pleadings of *Lycurgus*, the orator very coolly speaks of it, by the by, as a maxim of the Athenian people, that whenever they wanted money, they put to death some of the rich citizens as well as strangers, for the sake of the forfeiture. In mentioning this, he seems not to have any intention of blaming them, still less of provoking them, who were his audience and judges.

Whether a man was a citizen or a stranger among that people, it seemed indeed requisite, either that he should impoverish himself, or that the people would impoverish him, and perhaps kill him into the bargain. The orator last mentioned gives a pleasant account of an estate laid out in the public service,<sup>1</sup> that is, above the third of it in raree-shows and figured dances.

<sup>1</sup> In order to recommend his client to the favour of the people, he enumerates all the sums he had expended. When χορηγός 30 minas, upon a chorus of men 20 minas, ἐκπυρριχιστάς 8 minas, ἀνδράσι χορηγῶν, 50 minas, κυκλιᾷ χορῶ, 3 minas seven times trierarch, where he spent 6 talents taxes, once 30 minas another time 40, γυμνασι-αρχῶν 12 minas, χορηγῶν παιδικῶ χορῶ 15 minas κωμωδοῖς χορηγῶν, 18 minas, πυρριχισταῖς ἀγέρτοις, 7 minas; τοῖς ἡμετέροις ἀμειβόμενος, 15 minas, ἀρχιερέως, 30 minas in the whole ten talents 38 minas. An immense sum for an Athenian fortune, and what alone would be esteemed great riches. *Orat* 20. It is true, he says, the law did not oblige him absolutely to be at so much expense, not above a fourth. But without the favour of the people, nobody was so much as safe and this was the only way to gain it. See further, *Orat* 21, *de pop statu*. In another place, he introduces a speaker, who says that he had spent his whole fortune, and an immense one, eighty talents, for the people, *Orat* 25, *de Prob Erandis*. The μέτεροι or strangers, find says he, if they do not contribute largely enough to the people's fancy, that they have reason to repent it, *Orat* 30, *contra Phil.* You may see with what care Demosthenes displays his

I need not insist on the Greek tyrannies, which were altogether horrible. Even the mixed monarchies, by which most of the ancient states of Greece were governed, before the introduction of republics, were very unsettled. Scarcely any city, but Athens, says Isocrates, could show a succession of kings for four or five generations.

Besides many other obvious reasons for the instability of ancient monarchies, the equal division of property among the brothers of private families, must, by a necessary consequence, contribute to unsettle and disturb the state. The universal preference given to the elder by modern laws, though it increases the inequality of fortunes, has, however, this good effect, that it accustoms men to the same idea in public succession, and cuts off all claim and pretension of the younger.

The new settled colony of Heraclea, falling immediately into faction, applied to Sparta, who sent Heripidas with full authority to quiet their dissensions. This man, not provoked by any opposition, not inflamed by party rage, knew no better expedient than immediately putting to death about 500 of the citizens; a strong proof how deeply rooted these violent maxims of government were throughout all Greece.

If such was the disposition of men's minds among that refined people, what may be expected in the commonwealths of Italy, Africa, Spain, and Gaul, which were denominated barbarous? Why otherwise did the Greeks so much value themselves on their humanity, gentleness, and moderation, above all other nations? This reasoning seems very

expenses of this nature, when he pleads for himself *de coram*; and how he exaggerates Midias's stinginess in this particular, in his accusation of that criminal. All this, by the by, is a mark of a very iniquitous judicature: and yet the Athenians valued themselves on having the most legal and regular administration of any people in Greece.

natural But unluckily the history of the Roman commonwealth, in its earlier times, if we give credit to the received accounts, presents an opposite conclusion No blood was ever shed in any sedition at Rome till the murder of the Græchi Dionysius Halicarnassensis, observing the singular humanity of the Roman people in this particular, makes use of it as an argument that they were originally of Grecian extraction whence we may conclude, that the factions and revolutions in the barbarous republics were usually more violent than even those of Greece above mentioned

If the Romans were so late in coming to blows, they made ample compensation after they had once entered upon the bloody scene, and Appian's history of their civil wars contains the most frightful picture of massacres, proscriptions, and forfeitures, that ever was presented to the world What pleases most, in that historian, is, that he seems to feel a proper resentment of these barbarous proceedings, and talks not with that provoking coolness and indifference which custom had produced in many of the Greek historians<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The authorities above cited are all historians, orators and philosophers whose testimony is unquestioned It is dangerous to rely upon writers who deal in ridicule and satire What will posterity, for instance infer from this passage of Dr Swift? 'I told him that in the kingdom of Tribnia (Britain) by the natives called Langdon (London) where I had sojourned some time in my travels, the bulk of the people consist, in a manner, wholly of discoverers, witnesses, informers accusers prosecutors, evidences, swearers, together with their several subservient and subaltern instruments, all under the colour the conduct and pay of ministers of state and their deputies The plots in that kingdom are usually the workmanship of those persons etc *Gulliver's Travels* Such a representation might suit the government of Athens, not that of England, which is remarkable even in modern times, for humanity, justice, and liberty Yet the Doctor's satire though carried to extremes as is usual with him, even beyond other satirical writers, did

The maxims of ancient politics contain, in general, so little humanity and moderation, that it seems superfluous to give any particular reason for the acts of violence committed at any particular period. Yet I cannot forbear observing, that the laws, in the later period of the Roman commonwealth, were so absurdly contrived, that they obliged the heads of parties to have recourse to these extremities. All capital punishments were abolished: however criminal, or, what is more, however dangerous any citizen might be, he could not regularly be punished otherwise than by banishment: and it became necessary, in the revolutions of party, to draw the sword of private vengeance; nor was it easy, when laws were once violated, to set bounds to these sanguinary proceedings. Had Brutus himself prevailed over the *triumvirate*; could he, in common prudence, have allowed Octavius and Antony to live, and have contented himself with banishing them to Rhodes or Marseilles, where they might still have plotted new commotions and rebellions? His executing C. Antonius, brother to the *triumvir*, shows evidently his sense of the matter. Did not Cicero, with the approbation of all the wise and virtuous of Rome, arbitrarily put to death Catiline's accomplices, contrary to law, and without any trial or form of process? and if he moderated his executions, did it not proceed, either from the clemency of his temper, or the conjunctures of the times? A wretched security in a government which pretends to laws and liberty!

Thus one extreme produces another. In the same manner as excessive severity in the laws is apt to beget great relaxation in their execution; so their

not altogether want an object. The Bishop of Rochester, who was his friend, and of the same party, had been banished a little before by a bill of attainder, with great justice, but without such a proof as was legal, or according to the strict forms of common law.

excessive lenity naturally produces cruelty and barbarity. It is dangerous to force us, in any case, to pass their sacred boundaries.

One general cause of the disorders, so frequent in all ancient governments, seems to have consisted in the great difficulty of establishing any aristocracy in those ages, and the perpetual discontents and seditions of the people, whenever even the meanest and most beggarly were excluded from the legislature and from public offices. The very quality of *freemen* gave such a rank, being opposed to that of slave, that it seemed to entitle the possessor to every power and privilege of the commonwealth. Solon's laws excluded no freemen from votes or elections, but confined some magistracies to a particular *census*, yet were the people never satisfied till those laws were repealed. By the treaty with Antipater, no Athenian was allowed a vote whose *census* was less than 2,000 *drachmas* (about 60/ sterling). And though such a government would to us appear sufficiently democratical, it was so disagreeable to that people, that above two thirds of them immediately left their country. Cassander reduced that *census* to the half, yet still the government was considered as an oligarchical tyranny, and the effect of foreign violence.

Servius Tullius's laws seem equal and reasonable, by fixing the power in proportion to the property, yet the Roman people could never be brought quietly to submit to them.

In those days there was no medium between a severe, jealous aristocracy, ruling over discontented subjects, and a turbulent, factious, tyrannical democracy. At present, there is not one republic in Europe, from one extremity of it to the other, that is not remarkable for justice, lenity, and stability, equal to, or even beyond Marseilles, Rhodes or the most celebrated in antiquity. Almost all of them are well tempered aristocracies.

But *thirdly*, There are many other circumstances in which ancient nations seem inferior to the modern, both for the happiness and increase of mankind. Trade, manufactures, industry, were nowhere, in former ages, so flourishing as they are at present in Europe. The only garb of the ancients, both for males and females, seems to have been a kind of flannel, which they wore, commonly white or grey, and which they scoured as often as it became dirty. Tyre, which carried on, after Carthage, the greatest commerce of any city in the Mediterranean, before it was destroyed by Alexander, was no mighty city, if we credit Arrian's account of its inhabitants. Athens is commonly supposed to have been a trading city; but it was as populous before the Median war as at any time after it, according to Herodotus; yet its commerce at that time was so inconsiderable, that, as the same historian observes, even the neighbouring coasts of Asia were as little frequented by the Greeks as the Pillars of Hercules, for beyond these he conceived nothing.

Great interest of money, and great profits of trade, are an infallible indication, that industry and commerce are but in their infancy. We read in Lysias of 100 *per cent.* profit made on a cargo of two talents, sent to no greater distance than from Athens to the Adriatic; nor is this mentioned as an instance of extraordinary profit. Antidorus, says Demosthenes, paid three talents and a half for a house, which he let at a talent a year; and the orator blames his own tutors for not employing his money to like advantage. My fortune, says he, in eleven years' minority, ought to have been tripled. The value of 20 of the slaves left by his father, he computes at 40 minas, and the yearly profit of their labour at 12. The most moderate interest at Athens (for there was higher often paid), was 12 *per cent.*, and that paid monthly. Not to

insist upon the high interest to which the vast sums distributed in elections had raised money at Rome, we find, that Verres, before that fictitious period, stated 24 *per cent* for money which he left in the hands of the publicans, and though Cicero exclaims against this article, it is not on account of the extravagant usury, but because it had never been customary to state any interest on such occasions. Interest, indeed, sunk at Rome, after the settlement of the empire, but it never remained any considerable time so low as in the commercial states of modern times.

Among the other inconveniences which the Athenians felt from the fortifying of Decelia by the Lacedæmonians, it is represented by Thucydides, as one of the most considerable, that they could not bring over their corn from Iulæa by land, passing by Oropus, but were obliged to embark it, and to sail round the promontory of Sunium, a surprising instance of the imperfection of ancient navigation, for the water-carriage is not here above double the land.

I do not remember a passage in any ancient author, where the growth of a city is ascribed to the establishment of a manufacture. The commerce, which is said to flourish, is chiefly the exchange of those commodities, for which different soils and climates were suited. The sale of wine and oil into Africa, according to Diodorus Siculus, was the foundation of the riches of Agrigentum. The situation of the city of Sybaris, according to the same author, was the cause of its immense populousness, being built near the two rivers Crathis and Sybaris. But these two rivers, we may observe, are not navigable, and could only produce some fertile valleys for agriculture and tillage, an advantage so inconsiderable, that a modern writer would scarcely have taken notice of it.



The barbarity of the ancient tyrants, together with the extreme love of liberty which animated those ages, must have banished every merchant and manufacturer, and have quite depopulated the state, had it subsisted upon industry and commerce. While the cruel and suspicious Dionysius was carrying on his butcheries, who, that was not detained by his landed property, and could have carried with him any art or skill to procure a subsistence in other countries, would have remained exposed to such implacable barbarity? The persecutions of Philip II. and Louis XIV. filled all Europe with the manufactures of Flanders and of France.

I grant, that agriculture is the species of industry chiefly requisite to the subsistence of multitudes; and it is possible that this industry may flourish, even where manufactures and other arts are unknown and neglected. Switzerland is at present a remarkable instance, where we find, at once, the most skilful husbandmen, and the most bungling tradesmen, that are to be met with in Europe. That agriculture flourished in Greece and Italy, at least in some parts of them, and at some periods, we have reason to presume; and whether the mechanical arts had reached the same degree of perfection, may not be esteemed so material, especially if we consider the great equality of riches in the ancient republics, where each family was obliged to cultivate, with the greatest care and industry, its own little field, in order to its subsistence.

But is it just reasoning, because agriculture may, in some instances, flourish without trade or manufactures, to conclude, that, in any great extent of country, and for any great tract of time, it would subsist alone? The most natural way, surely, of encouraging husbandry, is, first, to excite other kinds of industry, and thereby afford the labourer

a ready market for his commodities, and a return for such goods as may contribute to his pleasure and enjoyment. This method is infallible and universal, and, as it prevails more in modern governments than in the ancient, it affords a presumption of the superior populousness of the former.

Every man, says Xenophon, may be a farmer: no art or skill is requisite: all consists in industry, and in attention to the execution, a strong proof, as Columella hints, that agriculture was but little known in the age of Xenophon.

All our later improvements and refinements, have they done nothing towards the easy subsistence of men, and consequently towards their propagation and increase? Our superior skill in mechanics, the discovery of new worlds, by which commerce has been so much enlarged, the establishment of posts, and the use of bills of exchange: these seem all extremely useful to the encouragement of art, industry, and populousness. Were we to strike off these, what a check should we give to every kind of business and labour, and what multitudes of families would immediately perish from want and hunger? And it seems not probable, that we could supply the place of these new inventions by any other regulation or institution.

Have we reason to think, that the police of ancient states was anywise comparable to that of modern, or that men had then equal security, either at home, or in their journeys by land or water? I question not, but every impartial examiner would give us the preference in this particular.

Thus, upon comparing the whole, it seems impossible to assign any just reason, why the world should have been more populous in ancient than in modern times. The equality of property among the ancients, liberty, and the small divisions of their states, were indeed circumstances favourable to the propagation of mankind: but their wars

were more bloody and destructive, their governments more factious and unsettled, commerce and manufactures more feeble and languishing, and the general police more loose and irregular. These latter disadvantages seem to form a sufficient counterbalance to the former advantages; and rather favour the opposite opinion to that which commonly prevails with regard to this subject.

But there is no reasoning, it may be said, against matter of fact. If it appear that the world was then more populous than at present, we may be assured that our conjectures are false, and that we have overlooked some material circumstance in the comparison. This I readily own: all our preceding reasonings I acknowledge to be mere trifling, or, at least, small skirmishes and frivolous rencounters, which decide nothing. But unluckily the main combat, where we compare facts, cannot be rendered much more decisive. The facts delivered by ancient authors are either so uncertain or so imperfect as to afford us nothing positive in this matter. How indeed could it be otherwise? The very facts which we must oppose to them, in computing the populousness of modern states, are far from being either certain or complete. Many grounds of calculation proceeded on by celebrated writers are little better than those of the emperor Heliogabalus, who formed an estimate of the immense greatness of Rome from ten thousand pounds weight of cobwebs which had been found in that city.

It is to be remarked, that all kinds of numbers are uncertain in ancient manuscripts, and have been subject to much greater corruptions than any other part of the text, and that for an obvious reason. Any alteration in other places commonly affects the sense of grammar, and is more readily perceived by the reader and transcriber.

Few enumerations of inhabitants have been made of any tract of country by any ancient author of

good authority, so as to afford us a large enough view for comparison.

It is probable that there was formerly a good foundation for the number of citizens assigned to any free city, because they entered for a share in the government, and there were exact registers kept of them. But as the number of slaves is seldom mentioned, this leaves us in as great uncertainty as ever with regard to the populousness even of single cities.

The first page of Thucydides is, in my opinion, the commencement of real history. All preceding narrations are so intermixed with fable, that philosophers ought to abandon them, in a great measure, to the embellishment of poets and orators.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to remoter times, the numbers of people assigned are often ridiculous, and lose all credit and authority. The free citizens of Sybaris, able to bear arms, and actually drawn out in battle, were 300,000. They encountered at Sygta with 100,000 citizens of Crotona, another Greek city contiguous to them, and were defeated.—This is Diodorus Siculus's account, and is very seriously insisted on by that historian. Strabo also mentions the same number of Sybarites.

Diodorus Siculus, enumerating the inhabitants of Agrigentum, when it was destroyed by the

<sup>1</sup> In general, there is more candour and sincerity in ancient historians, but less exactness and care, than in the moderns. Our speculative factions, especially those of religion, throw such an illusion over our minds, that men seem to regard impartiality to their adversaries and to heretics as a vice or weakness. But the commonness of books, by means of printing, has obliged modern historians to be more careful in avoiding contradictions and incongruities. Diodorus Siculus is a good writer, but it is with pain I see his narration contradict, in so many particulars, the two most authentic pieces of all Greek history, to wit, Xenophon's expedition, and Demosthenes's orations. Plutarch and Appian seem scarce ever to have read Cicero's epistles.

Carthaginians, says that they amounted to 20,000 citizens, 200,000 strangers, besides slaves, who in so opulent a city as he represents it, would probably be at least as numerous. We must remark, that the women and the children are not included; and that, therefore, upon the whole, this city must have contained near two millions of inhabitants. And what was the reason of so immense an increase? They were industrious in cultivating the neighbouring fields, not exceeding a small English county; and they traded with their wine and oil to Africa, which at that time produced none of these commodities.

Ptolemy, says Theocritus, commands 33,333 cities. I suppose the singularity of the number was the reason of assigning it. Diodorus Siculus assigns three millions of inhabitants to Egypt, a small number: but then he makes the number of cities amount to 18,000; an evident contradiction.

He says, the people were formerly seven millions. Thus remote times are always most envied and admired.

That Xerxes's army was extremely numerous, I can readily believe; both from the great extent of his empire, and from the practice among the eastern nations of encumbering their camp with a superfluous multitude: but will any rational man cite Herodotus's wonderful narrations as any authority? There is something very rational, I own, in Lysias's argument upon this subject. Had not Xerxes's army been incredibly numerous, says he, he had never made a bridge over the Hellespont: it had been much easier to have transported his men over so short a passage with the numerous shipping of which he was master.

Polybius says that the Romans, between the first and second Punic wars, being threatened with an invasion from the Gauls, mustered all their own forces, and those of their allies, and found them

amount to seven hundred thousand men able to bear arms, a great number surely, and which, when joined to the slaves, is probably not less, if not rather more, than that extent of country affords at present.<sup>1</sup> The enumeration too seems to have been made with some exactness; and Polybius gives us the detail of the particulars. But might not the number be magnified, in order to encourage the people?

Diodorus Siculus makes the same enumeration amount to near a million. These variations are suspicious. He plainly too supposes, that Italy, in his time, was not so populous, another suspicious circumstance. For who can believe that the inhabitants of that country diminished from the time of the first Punic war to that of the *triumvirate*?

Julius Caesar, according to Appian, encountered four millions of Gauls, killed one million, and made another million prisoners. Supposing the number of the enemy's army and that of the slain could be exactly assigned, which never is possible, how could it be known how often the same man returned into the armies, or how distinguish the new from the old levied soldiers? No attention ought ever to be given to such loose, exaggerated calculations, especially where the author does not tell us the mediums upon which the calculations were founded.

Paterculus makes the number of Gauls killed by Caesar amount only to 400,000, a more probable account, and more easily reconciled to the history of these wars given by that conqueror himself in his Commentaries. The most bloody of his battles were fought against the Helveti and the Germans.

One would imagine that every circumstance of

<sup>1</sup> The country that supplied this number was not above a third of Italy, viz. the Pope's dominions, Tuscany, and a part of the kingdom of Naples: but perhaps in those early times there were very few slaves, except in Rome or the great cities.

the life and actions of Dionysius the elder might be regarded as authentic, and free from all fabulous exaggeration, both because he lived at a time when letters flourished most in Greece, and because his chief historian was Philistus, a man allowed to be of great genius, and who was a courtier and minister of that prince. But can we admit that he had a standing army of 100,000 foot, 10,000 horse, and a fleet of 400 galleys? These, we may observe, were mercenary forces, and subsisted upon pay, like our armies in Europe, for the citizens were all disarmed; and when Dion afterwards invaded Sicily, and called on his countrymen to vindicate their liberty, he was obliged to bring arms along with him, which he distributed among those who joined him. In a state where agriculture alone flourishes, there may be many inhabitants; and if these be all armed and disciplined, a great force may be called out upon occasion: but great bodies of mercenary troops can never be maintained without either great trade and numerous manufactures, or extensive dominions. The United Provinces never were masters of such a force by sea and land as that which is said to belong to Dionysius; yet they possess as large a territory, perfectly well cultivated, and have much more resources from their commerce and industry. Diodorus Siculus allows, that, even in his time, the army of Dionysius appeared incredible; that is, as I interpret it, was entirely a fiction; and the opinion arose from the exaggerated flattery of the courtiers, and perhaps from the vanity and policy of the tyrant himself.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The critical art may very justly be suspected of temerity, when it pretends to correct or dispute the plain testimony of ancient historians by any probable or analogical reasonings: yet the license of authors upon all subjects, particularly with regard to numbers, is so great, that we ought still to retain a kind of doubt or reserve, whenever the facts advanced depart in the least from the common bounds of nature and

It is a usual fallacy to consider all the ages of antiquity as one period, and to compute the numbers contained in the great cities mentioned by ancient authors as if these cities had been all contemporary. The Greek colonies flourished extremely in Sicily during the age of Alexander; but in Augustus's time they were so decayed, that almost all the produce of that fertile island was consumed in Italy.

Let us now examine the numbers of the inhabitants assigned to particular cities in antiquity, and, omitting the numbers of Nineveh, Babylon, and the Egyptian Thebes, let us confine ourselves to the sphere of real history, to the Grecian and Roman states. I must own, the more I consider this subject, the more am I inclined to scepticism with regard to the great populousness ascribed to ancient times.

Athens is said by Plato to be a very great city; and it was surely the greatest of all the Greek cities except Syracuse, which was nearly about the same size in Thucydides's time, and afterwards increased beyond it. For Cicero mentions it as the greatest of all the Greek cities in his time, not comprehending,

experience. I shall give an instance with regard to modern history. Sir William Temple tells us, in his *Memoirs* that having a free conversation with Charles the II., he took the opportunity of representing to that monarch the impossibility of introducing into this island the religion and government of France chiefly on account of the great force requisite to subdue the spirit and liberty of so brave a people. "The Romans," says he, "were forced to keep up twelve legions for that purpose (a great absurdity), and Cromwell left an army of near eighty thousand men. Must not this last be regarded as unquestioned by future critics, when they find it asserted by a wise and learned minister of state contemporary to the first and who addressed his discourse, upon an ungrateful subject, to a great monarch who was also contemporary, and who himself broke those very forces about fourteen years before? Yet, by the most undoubted authority, we may insist that Cromwell's army, when he died, did not amount to half the number here mentioned."



I suppose, either Antioch or Alexandria under that denomination. Athenæus says, that, by the enumeration of Demetrius Phalereus, there were in Athens 21,000 citizens, 10,000 strangers, and 400,000 slaves. This number is much insisted on by those whose opinion I call in question, and is esteemed a fundamental fact to their purpose : but, in my opinion, there is no point of criticism more certain than that Athenæus and Ctesicles, whom he quotes, are here mistaken, and that the number of slaves is at least augmented by a whole cipher, and ought not to be regarded as more than 40,000.

*First*, When the number of citizens are said to be 21,000 by Athenæus, men of full age are only understood. For, 1. Herodotus says, that Aristagoras, ambassador from the Ionians, found it harder to deceive one Spartan than 30,000 Athenians ; meaning, in a loose way, the whole state, supposed to be met in one popular assembly, excluding the women and children. 2. Thucydides says, that, making allowance for all the absentees in the fleet, army, garrisons, and for people employed in their private affairs, the Athenian assembly never rose to five thousand. 3. The forces enumerated by the same historian being all citizens, and amounting to 13,000 heavy-armed infantry, prove the same method of calculation ; as also the whole tenor of the Greek historians, who always understand men of full age when they assign the number of citizens in any republic. Now, these being but the fourth of the inhabitants, the free Athenians were by this account 84,000 ; the strangers 40,000 ; and the slaves, calculating by the smaller number, and allowing that they married and propagated at the same rate with freemen, were 160,000 ; and the whole of the inhabitants 284,000 ; a number surely large enough. The other number, 1,720,000, makes Athens larger than London and Paris united.

*Secondly*, There were but 10,000 houses in Athens.

*Thirdly*, Though the extent of the walls, as given us by Thucydides, be great (to wit, eighteen miles, beside the seacoast), yet Xenophon says there was much waste ground within the walls. They seem indeed to have joined four distinct and separate cities.

*Fourthly*, No insurrection of the slaves, or suggestion of insurrection, is ever mentioned by historians, except one commotion of the miners.

*Fifthly*, The treatment of slaves by the Athenians is said by Xenophon, and Demosthenes, and Plautus, to have been extremely gentle and indulgent, which could never have been the case, had the disproportion been twenty to one. The disproportion is not so great in any of our colonies, yet we are obliged to exercise a rigorous and military government over the negroes.

*Sixthly*, No man is ever esteemed rich for possessing what may be reckoned an equal distribution of property in any country, or even triple or quadruple that wealth. Thus, every person in England is computed by some to spend sixpence a day, yet he is esteemed but poor who has five times that sum. Now, Timarehus is said by Æschines to have been left in easy circumstances, but he was master of only ten slaves employed in manufactures. Ixias and his brother, two strangers, were proscribed by the Thirty for their great riches, though they had but sixty apiece. Demosthenes was left very rich by his father, yet he had no more than fifty-two slaves. His workhouse of twenty cabinet makers is said to be a very considerable manufactory.

*Seventhly*, During the Decelian war, as the Greek historians call it, 20,000 slaves deserted, and brought the Athenians to great distress, as we learn from Thucydides. This could not have happened had they been only the twentieth part. The best slaves would not desert.

*Eighthly*, Xenophon proposes a scheme for maintaining by the public 10,000 slaves and that so

great a number may possibly be supported, any one will be convinced, says he, who considers the numbers we possessed before the Decelian war; a way of speaking altogether incompatible with the larger number of Athenæus.

*Ninthly*, The whole *census* of the state of Athens was less than 6,000 talents. And though numbers in ancient manuscripts be often suspected by critics, yet this is unexceptionable; both because Demosthenes, who gives it, gives also the detail, which checks him; and because Polybius assigns the same number, and reasons upon it. Now, the most vulgar slave could yield by his labour an *obolus* a day, over and above his maintenance, as we learn from Xenophon, who says, that Nicias's overseer paid his master so much for slaves, whom he employed in mines. If you will take the pains to estimate an *obolus* a day, and the slaves at 400,000, computing only at four years' purchase, you will find the sum above 12,000 talents; even though allowance be made for the great number of holidays in Athens. Besides, many of the slaves would have a much greater value from their art. The lowest that Demosthenes estimates any of his father's slaves is two minas a head. And upon this supposition, it is a little difficult, I confess, to reconcile even the number of 40,000 slaves with the *census* of 6,000 talents.

*Tenthly*, Chios is said by Thucydides, to contain more slaves than any Greek city, except Sparta. Sparta then had more than Athens, in proportion to the number of citizens. The Spartans were 9,000 in the town, 30,000 in the country. The male slaves, therefore, of full age, must have been more than 780,000; the whole more than 3,120,000; a number impossible to be maintained in a narrow barren country, such as Laconia, which had no trade. Had the Helotes been so very numerous, the murder of 2,000, mentioned by Thucydides,

would have irritated them, without weakening them.

Besides, we are to consider, that the number assigned by Athenæus,<sup>1</sup> whatever it is, comprehends all the inhabitants of Attica, as well as those of Athens. The Athenians affected much a country life, as we learn from Thucydides, and when they were all chased into town, by the invasion of their territory during the Peloponnesian war, the city was not able to contain them; and they were obliged to lie in the porticos, temples, and even streets, for want of lodging.

The same remark is to be extended to all the other Greek cities; and when the number of citizens is assigned, we must always understand it to comprehend the inhabitants of the neighbouring country, as well as of the city. Yet even with this allowance, it must be confessed that Greece was a populous country, and exceeded what we could imagine concerning so narrow a territory, naturally not very fertile, and which drew no supplies of corn from other places. For, excepting Athens, which traded to Pontus for that commodity, the other cities seem to have subsisted chiefly from their neighbouring territory.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The same author affirms, that Corinth had once 400,000 slaves; Ægina 470,000. But the foregoing arguments hold stronger against these facts, which are indeed entirely absurd and impossible. It is however remarkable, that Athenæus cites so great an authority as Aristotle for this last fact: and the scholiast on Pindar mentions the same number of slaves in Ægina.

<sup>2</sup> DEMOST. *contra LYRT.* The Athenians brought yearly from Pontus 400,000 medimni or bushels of corn, as appeared from the custom-house books. And this was the greater part of their importation of corn. Thus, by the by, is a strong proof that there is some great mistake in the foregoing passage of Athenæus. For Attica itself was so barren of corn, that it produced not enough even to maintain the peasants. Tit. Liv. lib. xliii. cap. 6. And 400,000 medimni would scarcely feed 100,000 men during a twelvemonth. Lucian, in

Rhodes is well known to have been a city of extensive commerce, and of great fame and splendour; yet it contained only 6,000 citizens able to bear arms when it was besieged by Demetrius.

Thebes was always one of the capital cities of Greece; but the number of its citizens exceeded not those of Rhodes. Phliasia is said to be a small city by Xenophon, yet we find that it contained 6,000 citizens. I pretend not to reconcile these two facts. Perhaps Xenophon calls Phliasia a small town, because it made but a small figure in Greece, and maintained only a subordinate alliance with Sparta; or perhaps the country belonging to it was extensive, and most of the citizens were employed in the cultivation of it, and dwelt in the neighbouring villages.

Mantineia was equal to any city in Arcadia. Consequently it was equal to Megalopolis, which was fifty stadia, or six miles and a quarter in circumference. But Mantineia had only 3,000 citizens. The Greek cities, therefore, contained only fields and gardens, together with the houses; and we cannot judge of them by the extent of their walls. Athens contained no more than 10,000 houses; yet its walls, with the sea-coast, were above twenty miles in extent. Syracuse was twenty-two miles in circumference; yet was scarcely ever spoken of by the ancients as more populous than Athens. Babylon was a square of fifteen miles, or sixty miles in circuit; but it contained large cultivated fields and inclosures, as we learn from Pliny. Though Aurelian's wall was fifty miles in circumference, the circuit of all the thirteen divisions of

his *navigium sive vota*, says, that a ship, which, by the dimensions he gives, seems to have been about the size of our third rates, carried as much corn as would maintain Attica for a twelvemonth. But perhaps Athens was decayed at that time; and, besides, it is not safe to trust to such loose rhetorical calculations.

Rome, taken apart, according to Puhlin's Victor, was only about forty-three miles. When an enemy invaded the country, all the inhabitants retired within the walls of the ancient cities, with their cattle and furniture, and instruments of husbandry, and the great height to which the walls were raised, enabled a small number to defend them with facility.

Sparta, says Xenophon, is one of the cities of Greece that has the fewest inhabitants. Yet Polybius says that it was forty eight stadia in circumference, and was round.

All the Aitolians able to bear arms in Antipater's time, deducting some few garrisons, were but 10,000 men.

Polybius tells us, that the Achaean league might, without any inconvenience, march 30 or 40,000 men and this account seems probable; for that league comprehended the greater part of Peloponnesus. Yet Pausanias, speaking of the same period, says, that all the Achaeans able to bear arms even when several manumitted slaves were joined to them, did not amount to 15,000.

The Thessalians, till their final conquest by the Romans, were, in all ages, turbulent, factious, seditious, disorderly. It is not therefore natural to suppose that this part of Greece abounded much in people.

We are told by Thucydides, that the part of Peloponnesus, adjoining to Pylos, was desert and uncultivated. Herodotus says, that Macedonia was full of lions and wild bulls, animals which can only inhabit vast unpeopled forests. These were the two extremities of Greece.

All the inhabitants of Epirus, of all ages, sexes, and conditions, who were sold by Paulus Aemilius, amounted only to 160,000. Yet Epirus might be double the extent of Yorkshire.

Justin tells us, that when Philip of Macedon was declared head of the Greek confederacy, he called

a congress of all the states, except the Lacedemonians, who refused to concur ; and he found the force of the whole, upon computation, to amount to 200,000 infantry and 15,000 cavalry. This must be understood to be all the citizens capable of bearing arms. For as the Greek republics maintained no mercenary forces, and had no militia distinct from the whole body of the citizens, it is not conceivable what other medium there could be of computation. That such an army could ever, by Greece, be brought into the field, and be maintained there, is contrary to all history. Upon this supposition, therefore, we may thus reason. The free Greeks of all ages and sexes were 860,000. The slaves, estimating them by the number of Athenian slaves as above, who seldom married or had families, were double the male citizens of full age, to wit, 430,000. And all the inhabitants of ancient Greece, excepting Laconia, were about one million two hundred and ninety thousand ; no mighty number, nor exceeding what may be found at present in Scotland, a country of not much greater extent, and very indifferently peopled.

We may now consider the numbers of people in Rome and Italy, and collect all the lights afforded us by scattered passages in ancient authors. We shall find, upon the whole, a great difficulty in fixing any opinion on that head ; and no reason to support those exaggerated calculations, so much insisted on by modern writers.

Dionysius Halicarnassens says, that the ancient walls of Rome were nearly of the same compass with those of Athens, but that the suburbs ran out to a great extent ; and it was difficult to tell where the town ended, or the country began. In some places of Rome, it appears, from the same author, from Juvenal, and from other ancient writers,<sup>1</sup> that

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, lib. v. says, that the Emperor Augustus prohibited the raising houses higher than seventy feet. In

the houses were high, and families lived in separate stories, one above another: but is it probable that these were only the poorer citizens, and only in some few streets? If we may judge from the younger Pliny's account of his own house, and from Bartoli's plans of ancient buildings, the men of quality had very spacious palaces: and their buildings were like the Chinese houses at this day, where each apartment is separated from the rest, and rises no higher than a single story. To which if we add, that the Roman nobility much affected extensive porticos, and even woods in town, we may perhaps allow Vossius (though there is no manner of reason for it), to read the famous passage of the elder Pliny<sup>1</sup> his own way, without admitting the extravagant consequences which he draws from it.

In another passage, lib. xvii., he speaks of the houses of Rome as remarkably high. See also to the same purpose Vitruvius, lib. ii. cap. 8. Aristides the sophist, in his oration *ad Populum*, says, that Rome consisted of cities on the top of cities; and that if one were to spread it out and unfold it, it would cover the whole surface of Italy. Where an author indulges himself in such extravagant declamations, and gives so much into the hyperbolical style, one knows not how far he must be refused. But this reasoning seems natural: if Rome was built in so scattered a manner as Dionysius says, and ran so much into the country, there must have been very few streets where the houses were raised so high. It is only for want of room that anybody builds in that inconvenient manner.

<sup>1</sup> *"Moenia ejus (Romæ) collegere amb'tu imperatoribus, censoribusque Vespasianis, A. U. C. 829. pass. xiii. M.C. complexa montes septem, ipsa distitur in regiones quatuordecim, compita earum 265. Eiusdem spatii mensura, currente a Milliaro in capite Romæ. Fori statuto, ad singulas portas, quæ sunt hodie numero 37, ita ut duodecim portas semel numerentur, prætereanturque ex veteribus septem, quæ esse desierunt, efficit passuum per directam 30,775. Ad extrema vero tectorum cum castris prætoris ab eodem Milliaro, per vicos omnium vicarum, mensura collegit paulo amplius septuaginta milia passuum. Quo si quis altitudinem tectorum addat, dignam profecto, æstimationem concipiat,*



The number of citizens who received corn by the public distribution in the time of Augustus were two hundred thousand. This one would esteem a pretty

*fateaturque nullius urbis magnitudinem in toto orbe potuisse ei comparari.*" Plin. lib. iii. cap. 5.

All the best manuscripts of Pliny read the passage as here cited, and fix the compass of the walls of Rome to be thirteen miles. The question is, What Pliny means by 30,775 paces, and how that number was formed? The manner in which I conceive it is this. Rome was a semicircular area of thirteen miles circumference. The Forum, and consequently the Milliarium, we know, was situated on the banks of the Tiber, and near the centre of the circle, or upon the diameter of the semicircular area. Though there were thirty-seven gates to Rome, yet only twelve of them had straight streets, leading from them to the Milliarium. Pliny, therefore, having assigned the circumference of Rome, and knowing that that alone was not sufficient to give us a just notion of its surface, uses this further method. He supposes all the streets leading from the Milliarium to the twelve gates, to be laid together into one straight line, and supposes we run along that line, so as to count each gate once; in which case, he says, that the whole line is 30,775 paces, or, in other words, that each street or radius of the semicircular area is upon an average two miles and a half; and the whole length of Rome is five miles, and its breadth about half as much, besides the scattered suburbs.

Pere Hardouin understands this passage in the same manner, with regard to the laying together the several streets of Rome into one line, in order to compose 30,775 paces; but then he supposes that streets led from the Milliarium to every gate, and that no street exceeded 800 paces in length. But, 1st, A semicircular area, whose radius was only 800 paces, could never have a circumference near thirteen miles, the compass of Rome as assigned by Pliny. A radius of two miles and a half forms very nearly that circumference. 2d, There is an absurdity in supposing a city so built as to have streets running to its centre from every gate in its circumference, these streets must interfere as they approach. 3d, This diminishes too much from the greatness of ancient Rome, and reduces that city below even Bristol or Rotterdam.

The sense which Vossius, in his *Observationes variae*, puts on this passage of Pliny, errs widely in the other extreme. One manuscript of no authority, instead of thirteen miles, has assigned thirty miles for the compass of the walls of



Did the poorer citizens only receive the distribution? It was calculated, to be sure, chiefly for their benefit. But it appears from a passage in Cicero that the rich might also take their portion, and that it was esteemed no reproach in them to apply for it.

To whom was the corn given; whether only to heads of families, or to every man, woman, and child? The portion every month was five *modii* to each (about five-sixths of a bushel). This was too little for a family, and too much for an individual. A very accurate antiquary, therefore, infers, that it was given to every man of full age: but he allows the matter to be uncertain.

Was it strictly inquired, whether the claimant lived within the precincts of Rome? or was it sufficient that he presented himself at the monthly distribution? This last seems more probable.<sup>1</sup>

Were there no false claimants? We are told, that Cæsar struck off at once 170,000, who had crept in without a just title; and it is very little probable that he remedied all abuses.

But, lastly, what proportion of slaves must we assign to these citizens? This is the most material question, and the most uncertain. It is very doubtful whether Athens can be established as a rule for Rome. Perhaps the Athenians had more slaves, because they employed them in manufactures, for which a capital city, like Rome, seems not so proper. Perhaps, on the other hand, the Romans had more

should take a circumstance for granted which was so familiar to everybody. Perhaps, too, many of these gates led to wharves upon the river.

<sup>1</sup> Not to take the people too much from their business, Augustus ordained the distribution of corn to be made only thrice a year: but the people, finding the monthly distributions more convenient (as preserving, I suppose, a more regular economy in their family), desired to have them restored. Sueton. August. cap. 40. Had not some of the people come from some distance for their corn, Augustus's precaution seems superfluous.

slaves on account of their superior luxury and riches.

There were exact bills of mortality kept at Rome : but no ancient author has given us the number of burials, except Suetonius, who tells us, that in one season there were 30,000 names carried to the temple of Libitina : but this was during a plague, which can afford no certain foundation for any inference.

The public corn, though distributed only to 200,000 citizens, affected very considerably the whole agriculture of Italy ; a fact nowise reconcilable to some modern exaggerations with regard to the inhabitants of that country.

The best ground of conjecture I can find concerning the greatness of ancient Rome is this : we are told by Herodian, that Antioch and Alexandria were very little inferior to Rome. It appears from Diodorus Siculus that one straight street of Alexandria, reaching from gate to gate, was five miles long ; and as Alexandria was much more extended in length than breadth, it seems to have been a city nearly of the bulk of Paris ;<sup>1</sup> and Rome might be about the size of London.

<sup>1</sup> Quintus Curtius says, its walls were ten miles in circumference, when founded by Alexander, lib. iv. cap. 8. Strabo, who had travelled to Alexandria as well as Diodorus Siculus, says it was scarce four miles long, and in most places about a mile broad, lib. xvii. Pliny says it resembled a Macedonian cassock, stretching out in the corners, lib. v. cap. 10. Notwithstanding this bulk of Alexandria, which seems but moderate, Diodorus Siculus, speaking of its circuit as drawn by Alexander (which it never exceeded, as we learn from Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxii. cap. 16,) says it was *μεγέθει διασπορτα, extremely great*, *ibid.* The reason which he assigns for its surpassing all cities in the world (for he excepts not Rome) is, that it contained 300,000 free inhabitants. He also mentions the revenues of the kings, to wit, 6,000 talents, as another circumstance to the same purpose ; no such mighty sum in our eyes, even though we make allowance for the different value of money. What Strabo says of the neighbouring country, means only that it was

There lived in Alexandria, in Diodorus Siculus's time, 300,000 free people, comprehending, I suppose, women and children. But what number of slaves? Had we any just ground to fix these at an equal number with the free inhabitants, it would favour the foregoing computation.

There is a passage in Herodian which is a little surprising. He says positively, that the palace of the Emperor was as large as all the rest of the city. This was Nero's golden house, which is indeed represented by Suetonius and Pliny as of an enormous extent; but no power of imagination can make us conceive it to bear any proportion to such a city as London.

We may observe, had the historian been relating Nero's extravagance, and had he made use of such an expression, it would have had much less weight; these rhetorical exaggerations being apt to creep into an author's style, even when the most chaste and correct. But it is mentioned by Herodian only by the by, in relating the quarrels between Geta and Caracalla.

It appears from the same historian, that there was then much land uncultivated, and put to no manner of use; and he ascribes it as a great praise to Pertinax, that he allowed every one to take such land,

peopled, οἰκουμένα κάλως. Might not one affirm, without any great hyperbole, that the whole banks of the river, from Gravesend to Windsor, are one city? This is even more than Strabo says of the banks of the lake Marcotis, and of the canal to Canopus. It is a vulgar saying in Italy, that the king of Sardinia has but one town in Piedmont, for it is all a town. Agrippa, in *Josephus de bello Judaic.* lib. ii. cap. 16, to make his audience comprehend the excessive greatness of Alexandria, which he endeavours to magnify, describes only the compass of the city as drawn by Alexander; a clear proof that the bulk of the inhabitants were lodged there, and that the neighbouring country was no more than what might be expected about all great towns; very well cultivated, and well peopled.

either in Italy or elsewhere, and cultivate it as he pleased, without paying any taxes. *Lords uncultivated, and of no service of use!* This is not heard of in any part of Christendom, except in some remote parts of Hungary, as I have been informed: and it surely corresponds very ill with that idea of the extreme populousness of antiquity so much insisted on.

We learn from Vopiscus, that there was even in Etruria much fertile land uncultivated, which the emperor Aurelian intended to convert into vineyards in order to furnish the Roman people with a gratuitous distribution of wine; a very proper expedient for depopulating still further that capital, and all the neighbouring territories.

It may not be amiss to take notice of the account which Polybius gives of the great herds of swine to be met with in Etruria and Lombardy, as well as in Greece, and of the method of feeding them which was then practised. "There are great herds of swine," says he, "throughout all Italy, particularly in former times, through Etruria, and Cisalpine Gaul, and a herd frequently consists of a thousand or more swine. When one of these herds in feeding meets with another, they mix together; and the swine herds have no other expedient for separating them than to go to different quarters, where they sound their horn, and these animals, being accustomed to that signal, run immediately each to the horn of his own keeper. Whereas in Greece, if the herds of swine happen to mix in the forests, he who has the greater stock takes cunningly the opportunity of driving all away. And thieves are very apt to purloin the straggling hogs, which have wandered to a great distance from their keeper in search of food."

May we not infer, from this account, that the north of Italy, as well as Greece, was then much less peopled, and worse cultivated than at present?

How could these vast herds be fed in a country so full of inclosures, so improved by agriculture, so divided by farms, so planted with vines and corn intermingled together? I must confess, that Polybius's relation has more the air of that economy which is to be met with in our American colonies, than the management of an European country.

We meet with a reflection in Aristotle's *Ethics*, which seems unaccountable on any supposition, and, by proving too much in favour of our present reasoning, may be thought really to prove nothing. That philosopher, treating of friendship, and observing, that this relation ought neither to be contracted to a very few, nor extended over a great multitude, illustrates his opinion by the following argument: "In like manner," says he, "as a city cannot subsist, if it either have so few inhabitants as ten, or so many as a hundred thousand; so is there mediocrity required in the number of friends; and you destroy the essence of friendship by running into either extreme." What! impossible that a city can contain a hundred thousand inhabitants! Had Aristotle never seen nor heard of a city so populous? This, I must own, passes my comprehension.

Pliny tells us, that Seleucia, the seat of the Greek empire in the East, was reported to contain 600,000 people. Carthage is said by Strabo to have contained 700,000. The inhabitants of Pekin are not much more numerous. London, Paris, and Constantinople, may admit of nearly the same computation; at least, the two latter cities do not exceed it. Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, we have already spoken of. From the experience of past and present ages, one might conjecture that there is a kind of impossibility that any city could ever rise much beyond this proportion. Whether the grandeur of a city be founded on commerce or on empire, there seem to be invincible obstacles which prevent its further progress. The seats of vast monarchies, by introducing extravagant





woman, he represents her as breaking the ice of the Tiber, that she might perform her ablutions:—

Hibernum fracta glacie descendet in amnem,  
Ter matutino Tiberi mergetur.

He speaks of that river's freezing as a common event. Many passages of Horace suppose the streets of Rome full of snow and ice. We should have more certainty with regard to this point, had the ancients known the use of thermometers ; but their writers, without intending it, give us information sufficient to convince us, that the winters are now much more temperate at Rome than formerly. At present, the Tiber no more freezes at Rome than the Nile at Cairo. The Romans esteem the winters very rigorous if the snow lie two days, and if one see for eight-and-forty hours a few icicles hang from a fountain that has a north exposure."

The observation of this ingenious critic may be extended to other European climates. Who could discover the mild climate of France in Diodorus Siculus's description of Gaul? "As it is a northern climate," says he, "it is infested with cold to an extreme degree. In cloudy weather, instead of rain there fall great snows ; and in clear weather, it there freezes so excessive hard, that the rivers acquire bridges of their own substance ; over which, not only single travellers may pass, but large armies, accompanied with all their baggage and loaded wagons. And there being many rivers in Gaul, the Rhone, the Rhine, etc., almost all of them are frozen over ; and it is usual, in order to prevent falling, to cover the ice with chaff and straw at the places where the road passes." *Colder than a Gallic winter*, is used by Petronius as a proverbial expression. Aristotle says, that Gaul is so cold a climate that an ass could not live in it.

North of the Cevennes, says Strabo, Gaul produces not figs and olives : and the vines, which

have been planted, bear not grapes that will ripen

Ovid positively maintains, with all the serious affirmation of prose, that the Fuxine Sea was frozen over every winter in his time, and he appeals to Roman governors, whom he names, for the truth of his assertion. This seldom or never happens at present in the latitude of Tomi, whither Ovid was banished. All the complaints of the same poet seem to mark a rigour of the seasons, which is scarcely experienced at present in Petersburg or Stockholm.

Tournefort, a *Provençal*, who had travelled into the same country, observes, that there is not a finer climate in the world: and he asserts, that nothing but Ovid's melancholy could have given him such dismal ideas of it. But the facts mentioned by that poet are too circumstantial to bear any such interpretation.

Polybius says that the climate in Arcadia was very cold, and the air moist.

"Italy," says Varro, "is the most temperate climate in Europe. The inland parts, (Gaul, Germany, and Pannonia, no doubt,) "have almost perpetual winter."

The northern parts of Spain, according to Strabo, are but ill inhabited, because of the great cold.

Allowing, therefore, this remark to be just, that Europe is become warmer than formerly, how can we account for it? Plainly by no other method than by supposing, that the land is at present much better cultivated, and that the woods are cleared, which formerly threw a shade upon the earth, and kept the rays of the sun from penetrating to it. Our northern colonies in America become more temperate in proportion as the woods are felled,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The warm southern colonies also become more healthful and it is remarkable, that at the Spanish histories of the first discovery and conquest of these countries, they appear to

but, in general, every one may remark, that cold is still much more severely felt, both in North and South America, than in places under the same latitude in Europe.

Saserna, quoted by Columella, affirmed, that the disposition of the heavens was altered before his time, and that the air had become much milder and warmer ; as appears hence, says he, that many places now abound with vineyards and olive plantations, which formerly, by reason of the rigour of the climate, could raise none of these productions. Such a change, if real, will be allowed an evident sign of the better cultivation and peopling of countries before the age of Saserna ;<sup>1</sup> and if it be continued to the present times, is a proof that these advantages have been continually increasing throughout this part of the world.

Let us now cast our eye over all the countries which are the scene of ancient and modern history, and compare their past and present situation : we shall not, perhaps, find such foundation for the complaint of the present emptiness and desolation of the world. Egypt is represented by Maillet, to whom we owe the best account of it, as extremely populous, though he esteems the number of its inhabitants to be diminished. Syria and the Lesser Asia, as well as the coast of Barbary, I can readily own to be desert in comparison of their ancient condition. The depopulation of Greece is also obvious. But whether the country now called Turkey in Europe may not, in general, contain more inhabitants than during the flourishing period of Greece, may be a little doubtful. The Thracians seem then to have lived like the Tartars at present, have been very healthful, being then well peopled and cultivated. No account of the sickness or decay of Cortes's or Pizarro's small armies.

<sup>1</sup> He seems to have lived about the time of the younger Africanus, lib. i. cap. 1.

by pasturage and plunder. The Getae were still more uncivilized, and the Illyrians were no better. These occupy nine tenths of that country, and though the government of the Turks be not very favourable to industry and propagation, yet it preserves at least peace and order among the inhabitants, and is preferable to that barbarous, unsettled condition in which they anciently lived.

Poland and Muscovy in Europe are not populous, but are certainly much more so than the ancient Sarmatia and Scythia, where no husbandry or tillage was ever heard of, and pasturage was the sole art by which the people were maintained. The like observation may be extended to Denmark and Sweden. No one ought to esteem the immense swarms of people which formerly came from the North and overrun all Europe, to be any objection to this opinion. Were a whole nation, or even half of it, remove their seat, it is easy to imagine what a prodigious multitude they must form, with what desperate valour they must make their attacks, and how the terror they strike into the invaded nations will make these magnify, in their imagination, both the courage and multitude of the invaders! Scotland is neither extensive nor populous; but were the half of its inhabitants to seek new seats, they would form a colony as numerous as the Teutons and Cimbri, and would shake all Europe, supposing it in no better condition for defence than formerly.

Germany has surely at present twenty times more inhabitants than in ancient times, when they cultivated no ground, and each tribe valued itself on the extensive desolation which it spread around, as we learn from Caesar, and Tacitus, and Strabo, a proof that the division into small republics will not alone render a nation populous, unless attended with the spirit of peace, order, and industry.

*The barbarous condition of Britain in former*

times is well known; and the thinness of its inhabitants may easily be conjectured, both from their barbarity, and from a circumstance mentioned by Herodian, that all Britain was marshy, even in Severus's time, after the Romans had been fully settled in it above a century.

It is not easily imagined, that the Gauls were anciently much more advanced in the arts of life than their northern neighbours, since they travelled to this island for their education in the mysteries of the religion and philosophy of the Druids. I cannot, therefore, think that Gaul was then near so populous as France is at present.

Were we to believe, indeed, and join together, the testimony of Appian, and that of Diodorus Siculus, we must admit of an incredible populousness in Gaul. The former historian says, that there were 400 nations in that country; the latter affirms, that the largest of the Gallic nations consisted of 200,000 men, besides women and children, and the least of 50,000. Calculating, therefore, at a medium, we must admit of near 200,000,000 of people in a country which we esteem populous at present, though supposed to contain little more than twenty. Such calculations, therefore, by their extravagance, lose all manner of authority. We may observe, that the equality of property, to which the populousness of antiquity may be ascribed, had no place among the Gauls. Their intestine wars also, before Cæsar's time, were almost perpetual. And Strabo observes, that though all Gaul was cultivated, yet was it not cultivated with any skill or care; the genius of the inhabitants leading them less to arts than arms, till their slavery under Rome produced peace among themselves.

Cæsar enumerates very particularly the great forces which were levied in Belgium to oppose his conquests; and makes them amount to 208,000. These were not the whole people able to bear arms;

for the same historian tells us, that the Helonaci could have brought a hundred thousand men into the field, though they engaged only for sixty. Taking the whole, therefore, in it's proportion of ten to six, the sum of fighting men in all the states of Belgium was about 250,000; all the inhabitants a million and a half. And Belgium being about a fourth of Gaul, that country might contain six millions, which is not near the third of its present inhabitants<sup>1</sup>. We are informed by Cæsar, that the Gauls had no fixed property in land; but that the chieftains, when any death happened in a family, made a new division of all the lands among the several members of the family. This is the custom of *Tanistry*, which so long prevailed in Ireland, and which retained that country in a state of misery, barbarism, and desolation.

The ancient Helvetia was 250 miles in length, and 100 in breadth, according to the same author; yet contained only 150,000 inhabitants. The canton of Berne alone has, at present, as many people.

After this computation of Appian and Theodorus Siculus, I know not whether I dare affirm that the modern Dutch are more numerous than the ancient Batavi.

Spain is perhaps decayed from what it was three centuries ago; but if we step backward two thousand years, and consider the restless, turbulent, unsettled condition of its inhabitants, we may probably be inclined to think that it is now much more populous. Many Spaniards killed themselves when deprived

<sup>1</sup> It appears from Cæsar's account, that the Gauls had no domestic slaves, who formed a different order from the *Plebes*. The whole common people were indeed a kind of slaves to the nobility, as the people of Poland are at this day; and a nobleman of Gaul had sometimes ten thousand dependents of this kind. Nor can we doubt that the armies were composed of the people as well as of the nobility. An army of 100,000 noblemen, from a very small state, is incredible. The fighting men among the Helvetii were the

of their arms by the Romans. It appears from Plutarch, that robbery and plunder were esteemed honourable among the Spaniards. Hirtius represents, in the same light, the situation of that country in Cæsar's time; and he says, that every man was obliged to live in castles and walled towns for his security. It was not till its final conquest under Augustus that these disorders were repressed. The account which Strabo and Justin give of Spain corresponds exactly with those above mentioned. How much, therefore, must it diminish from our idea of the populousness of antiquity, when we find that Tully, comparing Italy, Africa, Gaul, Greece, and Spain, mentions the great number of inhabitants as the peculiar circumstance which rendered this latter country formidable?

Italy, however, it is probable, has decayed: but how many great cities does it still contain? Venice, Genoa, Pavia, Turin, Milan, Naples, Florence, Leghorn, which either subsisted not in ancient times, or were then very inconsiderable? If we reflect on this, we shall not be apt to carry matters to so great an extreme as is usual with regard to this subject.

When the Roman authors complain that Italy, which formerly exported corn, became dependent on all the provinces for its daily bread, they never ascribe this alteration to the increase of its inhabitants, but to the neglect of tillage and agriculture; a natural effect of that pernicious practice of importing corn, in order to distribute it *gratis* among the Roman citizens, and a very bad means of

fourth part of the inhabitants, a clear proof that all the males of military age bore arms. See *Cæsar de Bello Gall.* lib. i.

We may remark, that the numbers in Cæsar's Commentaries can be more depended on than those of any other ancient author, because of the Greek translation, which still remains, and which checks the Latin original.

multiplying the inhabitants of any country.<sup>1</sup> The *sportula*, so much talked of by Martial and Juvenal, being presents regularly made by the great lords to their smaller clients, must have had a like tendency to produce idleness, debauchery, and a continual decay among the people. The parish rates have at present the same bad consequences in England.

Were I to assign a period when I imagined this part of the world might possibly contain more inhabitants than at present, I should pitch upon the age of Trajan and the Antonines; the great extent of the Roman empire being then civilized and cultivated, settled almost in a profound peace, both foreign and domestic, and living under the same regular police and government. But we are told that all extensive governments, especially absolute monarchies, are pernicious to population, and contain a secret vice and poison, which destroy the effect of all these promising appearances. To confirm this, there is a passage cited from Plutarch, which, being somewhat singular, we shall here examine it.

That author, endeavouring to account for the silence of many of the oracles, says, that it may be ascribed to the present desolation of the world, proceeding from former wars and factions; which common calamity, he adds, has fallen heavier upon Greece than on any other country, insomuch that the whole could scarcely at present furnish three thousand warriors; a number which, in the time of the Median war, was supplied by the single city of Megara. The gods, therefore, who affect works of

<sup>1</sup> Though the observations of L'Abbé du Bos should be admitted, that Italy is now warmer than in former times, the consequence may not be necessary, that it is more populous or better cultivated. If the other countries of Europe were more savage and woody, the cold winds that blew from them might affect the climate of Italy.





But Plutarch says that the general depopulation had been more sensibly felt in Greece than in any other country. How is this reconcilable to its superior privileges and advantages?

Besides, this passage, by proving too much, really proves nothing. *Only three thousand men able to bear arms in all Greece!* Who can admit so strange a proposition, especially if we consider the great number of Greek cities, whose names still remain in history, and which are mentioned by writers long after the age of Plutarch? There are there surely ten times more people at present, when there scarcely remains a city in all the bounds of ancient Greece. That country is still tolerably cultivated, and furnishes a sure supply of corn, in case of any scarcity in Spain, Italy, or the south of France.

We may observe, that the ancient frugility of the Greeks, and their equality of property, still subsisted during the age of Plutarch, as appears from Lucian.<sup>1</sup> Nor is there any ground to imagine, that the country was possessed by a few masters, and a great number of slaves.

It is probable, indeed, that military discipline, being entirely useless, was extremely neglected in Greece after the establishment of the Roman empire; and if these commonwealths, formerly so warlike and ambitious, maintained each of them a small city guard, to prevent mobbish disorders, it is all they had occasion for; and these, perhaps, did not amount to 3,000 men throughout all Greece. I own, that if Plutarch had this fact in his eye, he is here guilty of a gross paralogism, and assigns causes nowise proportioned to the effects. But is it so great a prodigy that an author should fall into a mistake of this nature?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> De mercede conductis.

<sup>2</sup> I must confess that that discourse of Plutarch, concerning the silence of the oracles, is in general of so odd a texture and so unlike his other productions, that one is at a loss what

But whatever force may remain in this passage of Plutarch, we shall endeavour to counterbalance it by as remarkable a passage in Diodorus Siculus, where the historian, after mentioning Ninus's army of 1,700,000 foot, and 200,000 horse, endeavours to support the credibility of this account by some posterior facts; and adds, that we must not form a notion of the ancient populousness of mankind from the present emptiness and depopulation which is spread over the world. Thus an author, who lived at that very period of antiquity which is represented as most populous,<sup>1</sup> complains of the desolation which

judgment to form of it. It is written in dialogue, which is a method of composition that Plutarch commonly but little affects. The personages he introduces advance very wild, absurd, and contradictory opinions, more like the visionary systems or ravings of Plato, than the plain sense of Plutarch. There runs also through the whole an air of superstition and credulity, which resembles very little the spirit that appears in other philosophical compositions of that author. For it is remarkable, that though Plutarch be an historian as superstitious as Herodotus or Livy, yet there is scarcely, in all antiquity, a philosopher less superstitious, excepting Cicero and Lucian. I must therefore confess, that a passage of Plutarch, cited from this discourse, has much less authority with me, than if it had been found in most of his other compositions.

There is only one other discourse of Plutarch liable to like objections, to wit, that *concerning those whose punishment is delayed by the Deity*. It is also writ in dialogue, contains like superstitious, wild visions, and seems to have been chiefly composed in rivalry to Plato, particularly his last book *De Republica*.

And here I cannot but observe, that Mons. Fontenelle, a writer eminent for candour, seems to have departed a little from his usual character, when he endeavours to throw a ridicule upon Plutarch on account of passages to be met with in this dialogue concerning oracles. The absurdities here put into the mouths of the several personages are not to be ascribed to Plutarch. He makes them refute each other; and, in general, he seems to intend the ridiculing of those very opinions which Fontenelle would ridicule him for maintaining.—See *Histoire des Oracles*.

<sup>1</sup> He was contemporary with Cæsar and Augustus.

then prevailed, gives the preference to former times, and his recourse to ancient fables as a foundation for his opinion. The humour of blaming the present, and admiring the past, is strongly rooted in human nature, and has an influence even on persons endued with the profoundest judgment and most extensive learning.

## ESSAY XII

### OF THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT

As no party, in the present age, can well support itself without a philosophical or speculative system of principles annexed to its political or practical one, we accordingly find, that each of the factions into which this nation is divided has reared up a fabric of the former kind, in order to protect and cover that scheme of actions which it pursues. The people being commonly very rude builders, especially in this speculative way, and more especially still when actuated by party zeal, it is natural to imagine that their workmanship must be a little unshapely, and discover evident marks of that violence and hurry in which it was raised. The one party, by tracing up government to the Deity, endeavour to render it so sacred and inviolate, that it must be little less than sacrilege, however tyrannical it may become, to touch or invade it in the smallest article. The other party, by founding government altogether on the consent of the people, suppose that there is a kind of *original contract*, by which the subjects have tacitly reserved the power of resisting their sovereign, whenever they find themselves aggrieved by that authority with which they have, for certain purposes, voluntarily intrusted him. These are the speculative principles of the two parties, and these, too, are the practical consequences deduced from them.

I shall venture to affirm, *That both these systems of speculative principles are just, though not in the*

*sense intended by the parties and, That both the schemes of practical consequences are prudent, though not in the extremes to which each party, in opposition to the other, has commonly endeavoured to carry them*

That the Deity is the ultimate author of all government, will never be denied by any, who admit a general providence, and allow, that all events in the universe are conducted by an uniform plan, and directed to wise purposes. As it is impossible for the human race to subsist, at least in any comfortable or secure state, without the protection of government, this institution must certainly have been intended by that beneficent Being, who means the good of all his creatures and as it has universally, in fact, taken place in all countries, and all ages, we may conclude, with still greater certainty, that it was intended by that omniscient Being, who can never be deceived by any event or operation. But since he gave rise to it, not by any particular or miraculous interposition, but by his concerted and universal efficacy, a sovereign cannot, properly speaking, be called his viceroy in any other sense than every power or force, being derived from him, may be said to act by his commission. Whatever actually happens is comprehended in the general plan or intention of Providence, nor has the greatest and most lawful prince any more reason, upon that account, to plead a peculiar sacredness or inviolable authority, than an inferior magistrate, or even an usurper, or even a robber and a pirate. The same Divine Superintendent, who for wise purposes, invested a Titus or a Trajan with authority, did also, for purposes no doubt equally wise, though unknown, bestow power on a Borgia or an Angria. The same causes, which gave rise to the sovereign power in every state, established likewise every petty jurisdiction in it, and every limited authority. A constable, therefore, no less than a king, acts by

a divine commission, and possesses an indefeasible right.

When we consider how nearly equal all men are in their bodily force, and even in their mental powers and faculties, till cultivated by education, we must necessarily allow, that nothing but their own consent could at first associate them together, and subject them to any authority. The people, if we trace government to its first origin in the woods and deserts, are the source of all power and jurisdiction, and voluntarily, for the sake of peace and order, abandoned their native liberty, and received laws from their equal and companion. The conditions upon which they were willing to submit, were either expressed, or were so clear and obvious, that it might well be esteemed superfluous to express them. If this, then, be meant by the *original contract*, it cannot be denied, that all government is, at first, founded on a contract, and that the most ancient rude combinations of mankind were formed chiefly by that principle. In vain are we asked in what records this charter of our liberties is registered. It was not written on parchment, nor yet on leaves or barks of trees. It preceded the use of writing, and all the other civilized arts of life. But we trace it plainly in the nature of man, and in the equality, or something approaching equality, which we find in all the individuals of that species. The force, which now prevails, and which is founded on fleets and armies, is plainly political, and derived from authority, the effect of established government. A man's natural force consists only in the vigour of his limbs, and the firmness of his courage; which could never subject multitudes to the command of one. Nothing but their own consent, and their sense of the advantages resulting from peace and order, could have had that influence.

Yet even this consent was long very imperfect, and could not be the basis of a regular administration.

have attained a state of civil government. No compact or agreement, it is evident, was expressly formed for general submission, an idea far beyond the comprehension of savages. Each exertion of authority in the chieftain must have been particular, and called forth by the present exigencies of the case. The sensible utility, resulting from his interposition, made these exertions become daily more frequent, and their frequency gradually produced an habitual, and, if you please to call it so, a voluntary, and therefore precarious, acquiescence in the people.

But philosophers who have embraced a party (if that be not a contradiction in terms), are not contented with these concessions. They assert, not only that government in its earliest infancy arose from consent, or rather the voluntary acquiescence of the people, but also that, even at present, when it has attained its full maturity, it rests on no other foundation. They affirm, that all men are still born equal, and owe allegiance to no prince or government, unless bound by the obligation and sanction of a *promise*. And as no man, without some equivalent, would forego the advantages of his native liberty, and subject himself to the will of another, this promise is always understood to be conditional, and imposes on him no obligation, unless he meet with justice and protection from his sovereign. These advantages the sovereign promises him in return, and if he fail in the execution, he has broken, on his part, the articles of engagement, and has thereby freed his subject from all obligations to allegiance. Such, according to these philosophers, is the foundation of authority in every





that over the face of the whole earth, there scarcely remain any traces or memory of it.

But the contract, on which government is founded, is said to be the *original contract*, and consequently may be supposed too old to fall under the knowledge of the present generation. If the agreement, by which savage men first associated and conjoined their force, be here meant, this I acknowledge to be real, but being so ancient, and being obliterated by a thousand changes of government and princes, it cannot now be supposed to retain any authority. If we would say any thing to the purpose, we must assert, that every particular government which is lawful, and which imposes any duty of allegiance on the subject, was, at first, founded on consent and a voluntary compact. But, besides that this supposes the consent of the fathers to bind the children, even to the most remote generations (which republican writers will never allow), besides this, I say, it is not justified by history or experience in any age or country of the world.

Almost all the governments which exist at present, or of which there remains any record in story, have been founded originally, either on usurpation or conquest, or both, without any pretence of a fair consent or voluntary subjection of the people. When an artful and bold man is placed at the head of an army or faction, it is often easy for him, by employing, sometimes violence, sometimes false pretences, to establish his dominion over a people a hundred times more numerous than his partisans. He allows no such open communication, that his enemies can know, with certainty, their number or force. He gives them no leisure to assemble together in a body to oppose him. Even all those who are the instruments of his usurpation may wish his fall, but their ignorance of each other's intention keeps them in awe, and is the sole cause of his security. By such arts as these many governments have been

established ; and this is all the *original contract* which they have to boast of.

The face of the earth is continually changing, by the increase of small kingdoms into great empires, by the dissolution of great empires into smaller kingdoms, by the planting of colonies, by the migration of tribes. Is there any thing discoverable in all these events but force and violence ? Where is the mutual agreement or voluntary association so much talked of ?

Even the smoothest way by which a nation may receive a foreign master, by marriage or a will, is not extremely honourable for the people ; but supposes them to be disposed of like a dowry or a legacy, according to the pleasure or interest of their rulers.

But where no force interposes, and election takes place ; what is this election so highly vaunted ? It is either the combination of a few great men, who decide for the whole, and will allow of no opposition ; or it is the fury of a multitude, that follow a seditious ringleader, who is not known, perhaps, to a dozen among them, and who owes his advancement merely to his own impudence, or to the momentary caprice of his fellows.

Are these disorderly elections, which are rare too, of such mighty authority as to be the only lawful foundation of all government and allegiance ?

In reality there is not a more terrible event than a total dissolution of government, which gives liberty to the multitude, and makes the determination or choice of a new establishment depend upon a number, which nearly approaches to that of the body of the people : for it never comes entirely to the whole body of them. Every wise man then wishes to see, at the head of a powerful and obedient army, a general who may speedily seize the prize, and give to the people a master which they are so unfit to choose for themselves ; so

little correspondent is fact and reality to those philosophical notions.

Let not the establishment of the Revolution deceive us, or make us so much in love with a philosophical origin to government, as to imagine all others monstrous and irregular. Even that event was far from corresponding to these refined ideas. It was only the succession, and that only in the regal part of the government, which was then changed: and it was only the majority of seven hundred, who determined that change for near ten millions. I doubt not, indeed, but the bulk of the eleven millions acquiesced willingly in the determination: but was the matter left, in the least, to their choice? Was it not justly supposed to be, from that moment, decided, and every man punished, who refused to submit to the new sovereign? How otherwise could the matter have ever been brought to any issue or conclusion?

The republic of Athens was, I believe, the most extensive democracy that we read of in history: yet if we make the requisite allowances for the women, the slaves, and the strangers, we shall find, that that establishment was not at first made, nor any law ever voted, by a tenth part of those who were bound to pay obedience to it, not to mention the islands and foreign dominions, which the Athenians claimed as theirs by right of conquest. And as it is well known that popular assemblies in that city were always full of license and disorder, notwithstanding the institutions and laws by which they were checked, how much more disorderly must they prove, where they form not the established constitution, but meet tumultuously on the dissolution of the ancient government, in order to give rise to a new one? How chimerical must it be to talk of a choice in such circumstances?

The Achæans enjoyed the freest and most perfect democracy of all antiquity, yet they employed

force to oblige some cities to enter into their league, as we learn from Polybius.

Harry IV. and Harry VII. of England, had really no title to the throne but a parliamentary election; yet they never would acknowledge it, lest they should thereby weaken their authority. Strange, if the only real foundation of all authority be consent and promise?

It is in vain to say that all governments are, or should be, at first founded on popular consent, as much as the necessity of human affairs will admit. This favours entirely my pretension. I maintain, that human affairs will never admit of this consent, seldom of the appearance of it; but that conquest or usurpation, that is, in plain terms, force, by dissolving the ancient governments, is the origin of almost all the new ones which were ever established in the world. And that in the few cases where consent may seem to have taken place, it was commonly so irregular, so confined, or so much intermixed either with fraud or violence, that it cannot have any great authority.

My intention here is not to exclude the consent of the people from being one just foundation of government. Where it has place, it is surely the best and most sacred of any. I only contend, that it has very seldom had place in any degree, and never almost in its full extent; and that, therefore, some other foundation of government must also be admitted.

Were all men possessed of so inflexible a regard to justice, that of themselves they would totally abstain from the properties of others; they had for ever remained in a state of absolute liberty, without subjection to any magistrate or political society: but this is a state of perfection of which human nature is justly deemed incapable. Again, were all men possessed of so perfect an understanding as always to know their own interests, no form of

government had ever been submitted to but what was established on consent, and was fully canvassed by every member of the society; but this state of perfection is likewise much superior to human nature. Reason, history, and experience show us, that all political societies have had an origin much less accurate and regular; and were one to choose a period of time when the people's consent was the least required in public transactions, it would be precisely on the establishment of a new government. In a settled constitution their inclinations are often consulted, but during the fury of revolutions, conquests, and public convulsions, military force or political craft usually decides the controversy.

When a new government is established by whatever means the people are commonly dissatisfied with it, and pay obedience more from fear and necessity, than from any idea of allegiance or of moral obligation. The prince is watchful and jealous, and must carefully guard against every beginning or appearance of insurrection. Time, by degrees, removes all these difficulties, and accustoms the nation to regard, as their lawful or native princes, that family which at first they considered as usurpers or foreign conquerors. In order to found this opinion, they have no recourse to any notion of voluntary consent or promise, which, they know, never was, in this case, either expected or demanded. The original establishment was formed by violence, and submitted to from necessity. The subsequent administration is also supported by power, and acquiesced in by the people, not as a matter of choice, but of obligation. They imagine not that their consent gives their prince a title; but they willingly consent, because they think, that, from long possession, he has acquired a title, independent of their choice or inclination.

Should it be said, that, by living under the dominion of a prince which one might leave, every

individual has given a *tacit* consent to his authority, and promised him obedience; it may be answered, that such an implied consent can only have place where a man imagines that the matter depends on his choice. But where he thinks (as all mankind do who are born under established governments) that, by his birth, he owes allegiance to a certain prince or certain form of government; it would be absurd to infer a consent or choice, which he expressly, in this case, renounces and disclaims.

Can we seriously say, that a poor peasant or artisan has a free choice to leave his country, when he knows no foreign language or manners, and lives, from day to day, by the small wages which he acquires? We may as well assert that a man, by remaining in a vessel, freely consents to the dominion of the master; though he was carried on board while asleep, and must leap into the ocean and perish, the moment he leaves her.

What if the prince forbid his subjects to quit his dominions; as in Tiberius's time, it was regarded as a crime in a Roman knight that he had attempted to fly to the Parthians, in order to escape the tyranny of that emperor? Or as the ancient Muscovites prohibited all travelling under pain of death? And did a prince observe, that many of his subjects were seized with the frenzy of migrating to foreign countries, he would, doubtless, with great reason and justice, restrain them, in order to prevent the depopulation of his own kingdom. Would he forfeit the allegiance of all his subjects by so wise and reasonable a law? Yet the freedom of their choice is surely, in that case, ravished from them.

A company of men, who should leave their native country, in order to people some uninhabited region, might dream of recovering their native freedom, but they would soon find, that their prince still laid claim to them, and called them his subjects, even in their new settlement. And in this he

would but act conformably to the common ideas of mankind.

The truest *facti* consent of this kind that is ever observed, is when a foreigner settles in any country, and is beforehand acquainted with the prince, and government, and laws, to which he must submit: yet is his allegiance, though more voluntary, much less expected or depended on, than that of a natural born subject. On the contrary, his native prince still asserts a claim to him. And if he punishes not the renegade, when he seizes him in war with his new prince's commands; this clemency is not founded on the municipal law, which in all countries condemns the prisoner; but on the consent of princes, who have agreed to this indulgence, in order to prevent reprisals.

Did one generation of men go off the stage at once, and another succeed, as is the case with silkworms and butterflies, the new race, if they had sense enough to choose their government, which surely is never the case with men, might voluntarily, and by general consent, establish their own form of civil polity, without any regard to the laws or precedents which prevailed among their ancestors. But as human society is in perpetual flux, one man every hour going out of the world, another coming into it, it is necessary, in order to preserve stability in government, that the new brood should conform themselves to the established constitution, and nearly follow the path which their fathers, treading in the footsteps of theirs, had marked out to them. Some innovations must necessarily have place in every human institution; and it is happy where the enlightened genius of the age gives them a direction to the side of reason, liberty, and justice. But violent innovations no individual is entitled to make: they are even dangerous to be attempted by the legislature: more ill than good is ever to be expected from them: and if history affords examples to the



contrary, they are not to be drawn into precedent, and are only to be regarded as proofs, that the science of politics affords few rules, which will not admit of some exception, and which may not sometimes be controlled by fortune and accident. The violent innovations in the reign of Henry VIII. proceeded from an imperious monarch, seconded by the appearance of legislative authority : those in the reign of Charles I. were derived from faction and fanaticism ; and both of them have proved happy in the issue. But even the former were long the source of many disorders, and still more dangers ; and if the measures of allegiance were to be taken from the latter, a total anarchy must have place in human society, and a final period at once be put to every government.

Suppose that an usurper, after having banished his lawful prince and royal family, should establish his dominion for ten or a dozen years in any country, and should preserve so exact a discipline in his troops, and so regular a disposition in his garrisons that no insurrection had ever been raised, or even murmur heard against his administration : can it be asserted that the people, who in their hearts abhor his treason, have tacitly consented to his authority, and promised him allegiance, merely because, from necessity, they live under his dominion ? Suppose again their native prince restored, by means of an army, which he levies in foreign countries : they receive him with joy and exultation, and show plainly with what reluctance they had submitted to any other yoke. I may now ask, upon what foundation the prince's title stands ? Not on popular consent surely : for though the people willingly acquiesce in his authority, they never imagine that their consent made him sovereign. They consent, because they apprehend him to be already by birth, their lawful sovereign. And as to tacit consent, which may now be inferred from

their living under his dominion, this is no more than what they formerly gave to the tyrant and usurper.

When we assert that all lawful government arises from the consent of the people, we certainly do them a great deal more honour than they deserve, or even expect and desire from us. After the Roman dominions became too unwieldy for the republic to govern them, the people over the whole world were extremely grateful to Augustus for that authority which, by violence, he had established over them; and they showed an equal disposition to submit to the successor whom he left them by his last will and testament. It was afterwards their misfortune, that there never was, in one family, any long regular succession; but that their line of princes was continually broken, either by private assassinations or public rebellions. The *prætorian* bands, on the failure of every family, set up one emperor; the legions in the East a second; those in Germany, perhaps, a third; and the sword alone could decide the controversy. The condition of the people in that mighty monarchy was to be lamented, not because the choice of the emperor was never left to them, for that was impracticable, but because they never fell under any succession of masters who might regularly follow each other. As to the violence, and wars, and bloodshed, occasioned by every new settlement, these were not blamable, because they were inevitable.

The house of Lancaster ruled in this island about sixty years; yet the partisans of the white rose seemed daily to multiply in England. The present establishment has taken place during a still longer period. Have all views of right in another family been utterly extinguished, even though scarce any man now alive had arrived at the years of discretion when it was expelled, or could have consented to its dominion, or have promised it allegiance?—a

sufficient indication, surely, of the general sentiment of mankind on this head. For we blame not the partisans of the abdicated family merely on account of the long time during which they have preserved their imaginary loyalty. We blame them for adhering to a family which we affirm has been justly expelled, and which, from the moment the new settlement took place, had forfeited all title to authority.

But would we have a more regular, at least a more philosophical refutation of this principle of an original contract, or popular consent, perhaps the following observations may suffice.

All *moral* duties may be divided into two kinds. The *first* are those to which men are impelled by a natural instinct or immediate propensity which operates on them, independent of all ideas of obligation, and of all views either to public or private utility. Of this nature are love of children, gratitude to benefactors, pity to the unfortunate. When we reflect on the advantage which results to society from such humane instincts, we pay them the just tribute of moral approbation and esteem: but the person actuated by them feels their power and influence antecedent to any such reflection.

The *second* kind of moral duties are such as are not supported by any original instinct of nature, but are performed entirely from a sense of obligation, when we consider the necessities of human society, and the impossibility of supporting it, if these duties were neglected. It is thus *justice*, or a regard to the property of others, *fidelity*, or the observance of promises, become obligatory, and acquire an authority over mankind. For as it is evident that every man loves himself better than any other person, he is naturally impelled to extend his acquisitions as much as possible; and nothing can restrain him in this propensity but reflection and experience, by which he learns the pernicious

effects of that license, and the total dissolution of society which must ensue from it. His original inclination, therefore, or instinct, is here checked and restrained by a subsequent judgment or observation.

The case is precisely the same with the political or civil duty of *allegiance* as with the natural duties of justice and fidelity. Our primary instincts lead us either to indulge ourselves in unlimited freedom, or to seek dominion over others, and it is reflection only which engages us to sacrifice such strong passions to the interests of peace and public order. A small degree of experience and observation suffices to teach us, that society cannot possibly be maintained without the authority of magistrates, and that this authority must soon fall into contempt where exact obedience is not paid to it. The observation of these general and obvious interests is the source of all allegiance and of that moral obligation which we attribute to it.

What necessity, therefore, is there to found the duty of *allegiance*, or obedience to magistrates, on that of *fidelity*, or a regard to promises, and to suppose that it is the consent of each individual which subjects him to government, when it appears that both allegiance and fidelity stand precisely on the same foundation, and are both submitted to by mankind, on account of the apparent interests and necessities of human society? We are bound to obey our sovereign, it is said, because we have given a tacit promise to that purpose. But why are we bound to observe our promise? It must here be asserted, that the commerce and intercourse of mankind, which are of such mighty advantage, can have no security where men pay no regard to their engagements. In like manner may it be said that men could not live at all in society, at least in a civilized society, without laws, and magistrates, and judges, to prevent the encroachments of the strong

upon the weak, of the violent upon the just and equitable. The obligation to allegiance being of like force and authority with the obligation to fidelity, we gain nothing by resolving the one into the other. The general interests or necessities of society are sufficient to establish both.

If the reason be asked of that obedience which we are bound to pay to government, I readily answer, *Because society could not otherwise subsist*; and this answer is clear and intelligible to all mankind. Your answer is, *Because we should keep our word*. But besides that nobody, till trained in a philosophical system, can either comprehend or relish this answer; besides this, I say, you find yourself embarrassed when it is asked, *Why we are bound to keep our word*? Nor can you give any answer but what would immediately, without any circuit, have accounted for our obligation to allegiance.

But to whom is allegiance due, and who is our lawful sovereign? This question is often the most difficult of any, and liable to infinite discussions. When people are so happy that they can answer, *Our present sovereign, who inherits, in a direct line, from ancestors that have governed us for many ages*, this answer admits of no reply, even though historians, in tracing up to the remotest antiquity the origin of that royal family, may find, as commonly happens, that its first authority was derived from usurpation and violence. It is confessed that private justice, or the abstinence from the properties of others, is a most cardinal virtue. Yet reason tells us that there is no property in durable objects, such as land or houses, when carefully examined in passing from hand to hand, but must, in some period, have been founded on fraud and injustice. The necessities of human society, neither in private nor public life, will allow of such an accurate inquiry; and there is no virtue or moral duty but what may, with facility, be refined away, if we indulge a false

philosophy in sifting and scrutinizing it, by every captious rule of logic, in every light or position in which it may be placed

The questions with regard to private property have filled infinite volumes of law and philosophy, if in both we add the commentators to the original text, and in the end we may safely pronounce, that many of the rules there established are uncertain, ambiguous, and arbitrary. The like opinion may be formed with regard to the succession and rights of princes, and forms of government. Several cases no doubt occur, especially in the infancy of any constitution, which admit of no determination from the laws of justice and equity, and our historian Rapin pretends, that the controversy between Edward the Third and Philip de Valois was of this nature, and could be decided only by an appeal to heaven, that is, by war and violence.

Who shall tell me, whether Germanicus or Drusus ought to have succeeded to Tiberius, had he died while they were both alive without naming any of them for his successor? Ought the right of adoption to be received as equivalent to that of blood, in a nation where it had the same effect in private families and had already, in two instances, taken place in the public? Ought Germanicus to be esteemed the elder son, because he was born before Drusus, or the younger, because he was adopted after the birth of his brother? Ought the right of the elder to be regarded in a nation, where he had no advantage in the succession of private families? Ought the Roman empire at that time to be deemed hereditary, because of two examples, or ought it even so early, to be regarded as belonging to the stronger, or to the present possessor, as being founded on so recent an usurpation?

Commodus mounted the throne after a pretty long succession of excellent emperors, who had acquired their title, not by birth, or public election, but by

the fictitious rite of adoption. The bloody debauchee being murdered by a conspiracy, suddenly formed between his wench and her gallant, who happened at that time to be *Prætorian Præfect*, these immediately deliberated about choosing a master to the human kind, to speak in the style of those ages; and they cast their eyes on Pertinax. Before the tyrant's death was known, the *Præfect* went secretly to that senator, who, on the appearance of the soldiers, imagined that his execution had been ordered by Commodus. He was immediately saluted emperor by the officer and his attendants, cheerfully proclaimed by the populace, unwillingly submitted to by the guards, formally recognized by the senate, and passively received by the provinces and armies of the empire.

The discontent of the *Prætorian* bands broke out in a sudden sedition, which occasioned the murder of that excellent prince; and the world being now without a master, and without government, the guards thought proper to set the empire formally to sale. Julian, the purchaser, was proclaimed by the soldiers, recognized by the senate, and submitted to by the people; and must also have been submitted to by the provinces, had not the envy of the legions begotten opposition and resistance. Pescennius Niger in Syria elected himself emperor, gained the tumultuary consent of his army, and was attended with the secret good-will of the senate and people of Rome. Albinus in Britain found an equal right to set up his claim; but Severus, who governed Pannonia, prevailed in the end above both of them. That able politician and warrior, finding his own birth and dignity too much inferior to the imperial crown, professed, at first, an intention only of revenging the death of Pertinax. He marched as general into Italy, defeated Julian, and, without our being able to fix any precise commencement even of the soldiers' consent, he was from necessity

acknowledged emperor by the senate and people, and fully established in his violent authority, by subduing Niger and Albinus.

*"Inter hæc Gordianus Cæsar"* (says Capitolinus, speaking of another period) *"sublatus a militibus Imperator est appellatus, quia non erat alius in præsentis"*. It is to be remarked, that Gordian was a boy of fourteen years of age.

Frequent instances of a like nature occur in the history of the emperors, in that of Alexander's successors; and of many other countries. nor can any thing be more unhappy than a despotic government of this kind; where the succession is disjointed and irregular, and must be determined on every vacancy by force or election. In a free government, the matter is often unavoidable, and is also much less dangerous. The interests of liberty may there frequently lead the people, in their own defence, to alter the succession of the crown. And the constitution, being compounded of parts, may still maintain a sufficient stability, by resting on the aristocratical or democratical members, though the monarchical be altered, from time to time, in order to accommodate it to the former.

In an absolute government, when there is no legal prince who has a title to the throne, it may safely be determined to belong to the first occupant. Instances of this kind are but too frequent, especially in the eastern monarchies. When any race of princes expires, the will or destination of the last sovereign will be regarded as a title. Thus the edict of Louis XIV, who called the bastard princes to the succession in case of the failure of all the legitimate princes, would, in such an event, have some authority.<sup>1</sup> Thus the will of Charles the

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable, that in the remonstrance of the Duke of Bourbon and the legitimate princes against this destination of Louis XIV the doctrine of the *original contract* is insisted on, even in that absolute government. The French



Second disposed of the whole Spanish monarchy. The cession of the ancient proprietor, especially when joined to conquest, is likewise deemed a good title. The general obligation, which binds us to government, is the interest and necessities of society ; and this obligation is very strong. The determination of it to this or that particular prince, or form of government, is frequently more uncertain and dubious. Present possession has considerable authority in these cases, and greater than in private property ; because of the disorders which attend all revolutions and changes of government.

We shall only observe, before we conclude, that though an appeal to general opinion may justly, in the speculative sciences of metaphysics, natural philosophy, or astronomy, be deemed unfair and inconclusive, yet in all questions with regard to morals, as well as criticism, there is really no other standard, by which any controversy can ever be decided. And nothing is a clearer proof, that a theory of this kind is erroneous, than to find, that it leads to paradoxes repugnant to the common

nation, say they, choosing Hugh Capet and his posterity to rule over them and their posterity, where the former line fails, there is a tacit right reserved to choose a new royal family ; and this right is invaded by calling the bastard princes to the throne, without the consent of the nation. But the Comte de Boulainvilliers, who wrote in defence of the bastard princes, ridicules this notion of an original contract, especially when applied to Hugh Capet, who mounted the throne, says he, by the same arts which have ever been employed by all conquerors and usurpers. He got his title, indeed, recognized by the states after he had put himself in possession : but is this a choice or contract ? The Comte de Boulainvilliers, we may observe, was a noted republican ; but being a man of learning, and very conversant in history, he knew that the people were never almost consulted in these revolutions and new establishments, and that time alone bestowed right and authority on what was commonly at first founded on force and violence. See *Etat de la France*, vol. iii.



## ESSAY XIII

### OF PASSIVE OBEDIENCE

IN the former Essay, we endeavoured to refute the *speculative* systems of politics advanced in this nation, as well the religious system of the one party, as the philosophical of the other. We now come to examine the *practical* consequences deduced by each party, with regard to the measures of submission due to sovereigns.

As the obligation to justice is founded entirely on the interests of society, which require mutual abstinence from property, in order to preserve peace among mankind; it is evident that, when the execution of justice would be attended with very pernicious consequences, that virtue must be suspended, and give place to public utility, in such extraordinary and such pressing emergencies. The maxim, *fiat Justitia, ruat Cælum*, let justice be performed, though the universe be destroyed, is apparently false, and, by sacrificing the end to the means, shows a preposterous idea of the subordination of duties. What governor of a town makes any scruple of burning the suburbs, when they facilitate the approaches of the enemy? Or what general abstains from plundering a neutral country, when the necessities of war require it, and he cannot otherwise subsist his army? The case is the same with the duty of allegiance; and common sense teaches us, that as government binds us to obedience, only on account of its tendency to public utility, that duty must always, in extraordinary cases, when

public ruin would evidently attend obedience, yield to the primary and original obligation *Salus populi suprema Lex*, the safety of the people is the supreme law. This maxim is agreeable to the sentiments of mankind in all ages: nor is any one, when he recalls of the insurrections against Nero or Philip the Second, so infatuated with party systems, as not to wish success to the enterprise, and praise the undertakers. Even our high monarchical party, in spite of their sublime theory, are forced, in such cases, to judge, and feel and approve, in conformity to the rest of mankind.

Resistance, therefore, being admitted in extraordinary emergencies, the question can only be among good reasoners, with regard to the degree of necessity which can justify resistance, and render it lawful or commendable. And here, I must confess, that I shall always incline to their side, who draw the bond of allegiance very close, and consider an infringement of it as the last refuge in desperate cases, when the public is in the highest danger from violence and tyranny. For, besides the mischief of a civil war, which commonly attends insurrection, it is certain that, where a disposition to rebellion appears among any people, it is one chief cause of tyranny in the rulers, and forces them into many violent measures which they never would have embraced, had every one been inclined to submission and obedience. Thus, the *tyrannicide*, or assassination, approved of by ancient maxims, instead of keeping tyrants and usurpers in awe, made them ten times more fierce and unrelenting, and is now justly, upon that account, abolished by the laws of nations, and universally condemned as a base and treacherous method of bringing to justice these disturbers of society.

Besides, we must consider, that as obedience is our duty in the common course of things, it ought chiefly to be inculcated, nor can any thing be more

preposterous than an anxious care and solicitude in stating all the cases in which resistance may be allowed. In like manner, though a philosopher reasonably acknowledges, in the course of an argument, that the rules of justice may be dispensed with in cases of urgent necessity; what should we think of a preacher or casuist, who should make it his chief study to find out such cases, and enforce them with all the vehemence of argument and eloquence? Would he not be better employed in inculcating the general doctrine, than in displaying the particular exceptions, which we are, perhaps, but too much inclined of ourselves to embrace and to extend?

There are, however, two reasons which may be pleaded in defence of that party among us who have, with so much industry, propagated the maxims of resistance; maxims which, it must be confessed, are, in general, so pernicious and so destructive of civil society. The *first* is, that their antagonists, carrying the doctrine of obedience to such an extravagant height, as not only never to mention the exceptions in extraordinary cases (which might, perhaps, be excusable), but even positively to exclude them; it became necessary to insist on these exceptions, and defend the rights of injured truth and liberty. The *second*, and, perhaps, better reason, is founded on the nature of the British constitution and form of government.

It is almost peculiar to our constitution to establish a first magistrate with such high pre-eminence and dignity, that, though limited by the laws, he is, in a manner, so far as regards his own person, above the laws, and can neither be questioned nor punished for any injury or wrong which may be committed by him. His ministers alone, or those who act by his commission, are obnoxious to justice; and while the prince is thus allured by the prospect of personal safety, to give the laws their free course, an equal security is,

in effect, obtained by the punishment of lesser offenders, and, at the same time, a civil war is avoided, which would be the infallible consequence, were an attack at every turn made directly upon the sovereign. But, though the constitution pays this salutary compliment to the prince, it can never be reasonably understood by that maxim to have determined its own destruction, or to have established a tame submission, where he protects his ministers, perseveres in injustice, and usurps the whole power of the commonwealth. This case, indeed, is never expressly put by the laws, because it is impossible for them, in their ordinary course, to provide a remedy for it, or establish any magistrate, with superior authority, to chastise the exorbitances of the prince. But as a right without a remedy would be an absurdity, the remedy, in this case, is the extraordinary one of resistance, when affairs come to that extremity, that the constitution can be defended by it alone. Resistance, therefore, must of course become more frequent in the British government, than in others which are simpler, and consist of fewer parts and movements. Where the king is an absolute sovereign, he has little temptation to commit such enormous tyranny as may justly provoke rebellion. But where he is limited, his imprudent ambition, without any great vices, may run him into that perilous situation. This is frequently supposed to have been the case with Charles the First, and if we may now speak truth, after animosities are ceased, this was also the case with James the Second. These were harmless, if not, in their private character, good men, but mistaking the nature of our constitution, and engrossing the whole legislative power, it became necessary to oppose them with some vehemence, and even to deprive the latter formally of that authority, which he had used with such imprudence and indiscretion.

## ESSAY XIV

### OF THE COALITION OF PARTIES

To abolish all distinctions of party may not be practicable, perhaps not desirable in a free government. The only dangerous parties are such as entertain opposite views with regard to the essentials of government, the succession of the crown, or the more considerable privileges belonging to the several members of the constitution; where there is no room for any compromise or accommodation, and where the controversy may appear so momentous as to justify even an opposition by arms to the pretensions of antagonists. Of this nature was the animosity continued for above a century past, between the parties in England; an animosity which broke out sometimes into civil war, which occasioned violent revolutions, and which continually endangered the peace and tranquillity of the nation. But as there have appeared of late the strongest symptoms of an universal desire to abolish these party distinctions, this tendency to a coalition affords the most agreeable prospect of future happiness, and ought to be carefully cherished and promoted by every lover of his country.

There is not a more effectual method of promoting so good an end, than to prevent all unreasonable insult and triumph of the one party over the other, to encourage moderate opinions, to find the proper medium in all disputes, to persuade each that its antagonist may possibly be sometimes in the right, and to keep a balance in the praise and blame

which we bestow on either side. The two former Essays, concerning the *original contract* and *passive obedience*, are calculated for this purpose with regard to the *philosophical* and *practical* controversies between the parties, and tend to show that neither side are in these respects so fully supported by reason as they endeavour to flatter themselves. We shall proceed to exercise the same moderation with regard to the *historical* disputes between the parties by proving that each of them was justified by plausible topics, that there were on both sides wise men, who meant well to their country, and that the past animosity between the factions had no better foundation than narrow prejudice or interested passion.

The popular party, who afterwards acquired the name of Whigs, might justify, by very specious arguments, that opposition to the crown, from which our present free constitution is derived. Though obliged to acknowledge, that precedents in favour of prerogative had uniformly taken place during many reigns before Charles the First, they thought that there was no reason for submitting any longer to so dangerous an authority. Such might have been their reasoning: as the rights of mankind are for ever to be deemed sacred, no prescription of tyranny or arbitrary power can have authority sufficient to abolish them. Liberty is a blessing so inestimable, that, wherever there appears any probability of recovering it, a nation may willingly run many hazards, and ought not even to repine at the greatest effusion of blood or dissipation of treasure. All human institutions, and none more than government, are in continual fluctuation. Kings are sure to embrace every opportunity of extending their prerogatives: and if favourable incidents be not also laid hold of for extending and securing the privileges of the people, an universal despotism must for ever prevail amongst mankind.



The example of all the neighbouring nations proves, that it is no longer safe to intrust with the crown the same high prerogatives which had formerly been exercised during rude and simple ages. And though the example of many late reigns may be pleaded in favour of a power in the prince somewhat arbitrary, more remote reigns afford instances of stricter limitations imposed on the crown; and those pretensions of the parliament now branded with the title of innovations, are only a recovery of the just rights of the people.

These views, far from being odious, are surely large, and generous, and noble: to their prevalence and success the kingdom owes its liberty: perhaps its learning, its industry, commerce, and naval power: by them chiefly the English name is distinguished among the society of nations, and aspires to a rivalry with that of the freest and most illustrious commonwealths of antiquity. But as all these mighty consequences could not reasonably be foreseen at the time when the contest began, the royalists of that age wanted not specious arguments on their side, by which they could justify their defence of the then established prerogatives of the prince. We shall state the question, as it might have appeared to them at the assembling of that parliament, which, by its violent encroachments on the crown, began the civil wars.

The only rule of government, they might have said, known and acknowledged among men, is use and practice: reason is so uncertain a guide, that it will always be exposed to doubt and controversy: could it ever render itself prevalent over the people, men had always retained it as their sole rule of conduct: they had still continued in the primitive unconnected state of nature, without submitting to political government, whose sole basis is, not pure reason, but authority and precedent. Dissolve these ties, you break all the bonds of civil society,

and leave every man at liberty to consult his private interest, by those expedients, which his appetite, disguised under the appearance of reason, shall dictate to him. The spirit of innovation is in itself pernicious, however favourable its particular object may sometimes appear, a truth so obvious, that the popular party themselves are sensible of it, and therefore cover their encroachments on the crown by the plausible pretence of their recovering the ancient liberties of the people.

But the present prerogatives of the crown, allowing all the suppositions of that party, have been incontestably established ever since the accession of the House of Tudor, a period which, as it now comprehends a hundred and sixty years may be allowed sufficient to give stability to any constitution. Would it not have appeared ridiculous, in the reign of the Emperor Adrian, to have talked of the republican constitution as the rule of government, or to have supposed, that the former rights of the senate, and consuls, and tribunes, were still subsisting?

But the present claims of the English monarchs are much more favourable than those of the Roman emperors during that age. The authority of Augustus was a plain usurpation, grounded only on military violence, and forms such an epoch in the Roman history as is obvious to every reader. But if Henry VII. really, as some pretend, enlarged the power of the crown, it was only by insensible acquisitions, which escaped the apprehensions of the people, and have scarcely been remarked even by historians and politicians. The new government, if it deserves the epithet, is an imperceptible transition from the former, is entirely ingrafted on it, derives its title fully from that root, and is to be considered only as one of those gradual revolutions, to which human affairs, in every nation, will be for ever subject.

The house of Tudor, and after them that of

Stuart, exercised no prerogatives but what had been claimed and exercised by the Plantagenets. Not a single branch of their authority can be said to be an innovation. The only difference is, that perhaps former kings exerted these powers only by intervals, and were not able, by reason of the opposition of their barons, to render them so steady a rule of administration.<sup>1</sup> But the sole inference from this fact is, that those ancient times were more turbulent and seditious; and that royal authority, the constitution, and the laws, have happily of late gained the ascendant.

Under what pretence can the popular party now speak of recovering the ancient constitution? The former control over the kings was not placed in the commons, but in the barons: the people had no authority, and even little or no liberty; till the crown, by suppressing these factions tyrants, enforced the execution of the laws, and obliged all the subjects equally to respect each other's rights, privileges, and properties. If we must return to the ancient barbarous and feudal constitution, let those gentlemen, who now behave themselves with so much insolence to their sovereign, set the first example. Let them make court to be admitted as retainers to a neighbouring baron; and, by submitting to slavery under him, acquire some protection to themselves, together with the power of exercising rapine and oppression over their inferior slaves and villains. This was the condition of the commons among their remote ancestors.

<sup>1</sup> The author believes that he was the first writer who advanced, that the family of Tudor possessed in general more authority than their immediate predecessors; an opinion which he hopes will be supported by history, but which he proposes with some diffidence. There are strong symptoms of arbitrary power in some former reigns even after signing of the charters. The power of the crown in that age depended less on the constitution, than on the capacity and vigour of the prince who wore it.

But how far back must we go, in having recourse to ancient constitutions and governments? There was a constitution still more ancient than that to which these innovators affect so much to appeal. During that period there was no *Magna Charta*: the barons themselves possessed few regular, stated privileges; and the House of Commons probably had not an existence.

It is ridiculous to hear the Commons, while they are assuming, by usurpation, the whole power of government, talk of reviving the ancient institutions. Is it not known, that, though representatives received wages from their constituents, to be a member of the Lower House was always considered as a burden, and an exemption from it as a privilege? Will they persuade us that power, which of all human acquisitions is the most coveted, and in comparison of which, even reputation, and pleasure, and riches, are slighted, could ever be regarded as a burden by any man?

The property acquired of late by the Commons, it is said, entitles them to more power than their ancestors enjoyed. But to what is this increase of their property owing but to an increase of their liberty and their security? Let them therefore acknowledge that their ancestors, while the crown was restrained by the seditious barons, really enjoyed less liberty than they themselves have attained, after the sovereign acquired the ascendant: and let them enjoy that liberty with moderation, and not forfeit it by new exorbitant claims, and by rendering it a pretence for endless innovations.

The true rule of government is the present established practice of the age. That has most authority, because it is recent: it is also best known, for the same reason. Who has assured those tribunes that the Plantagenets did not exercise as high acts of authority as the Tudors? Historians, they say, do not mention them. But

historians are also silent with regard to the chief exertions of prerogative by the Tudors. Where any power or prerogative is fully and undoubtedly established, the exercise of it passes for a thing of course, and readily escapes the notice of history and annals. Had we no other monuments of Elizabeth's reign than what are preserved even by Camden, the most copious, judicious, and exact of our historians, we should be entirely ignorant of the most important maxims of her government.

Was not the present monarchical government, in its full extent, authorized by lawyers, recommended by divines, acknowledged by politicians, acquiesced in, nay, passionately cherished, by the people in general, and all this during a period of at least a hundred and sixty years, and, till of late, without the smallest murmur or controversy? This general consent surely, during so long a time, must be sufficient to render a constitution legal and valid. If the origin of all power be derived, as is pretended, from the people, here is their consent in the fullest and most ample terms that can be desired or imagined.

But the people must not pretend, because they can, by their consent, lay the foundations of government, that therefore they are to be permitted, at their pleasure, to overthrow and subvert them. There is no end of these seditious and arrogant claims. The power of the crown is now openly struck at: the nobility are also in visible peril: the gentry will soon follow: the popular leaders, who will then assume the name of gentry, will next be exposed to danger: and the people themselves, having become incapable of civil government, and lying under the restraint of no authority, must, for the sake of peace, admit, instead of their legal and mild monarchs, a succession of military and despotic tyrants.

These consequences are the more to be dreaded,

as the present fury of the people, though glossed over by pretensions to civil liberty, is in reality incited by the fanaticism of religion, a principle the most blind, headstrong and ungovernable, by which human nature can possibly be actuated. Popular rage is dreadful, from whatever motive derived; but must be attended with the most pernicious consequences, when it arises from a principle which disclaims all control by human law, reason, or authority.

These are the arguments which each party may make use of to justify the conduct of their predecessors during that great crisis. The event, if that can be admitted as a reason, has shown, that the arguments of the popular party were better founded, but perhaps, according to the established maxims of lawyers and politicians, the views of the royalists ought, beforehand, to have appeared more solid, more safe, and more legal. But this is certain, that the greater moderation we now employ in representing past events, the nearer shall we be to produce a full coalition of the parties, and an entire acquiescence in our present establishment. Moderation is of advantage to every establishment. nothing but zeal can overturn a settled power, and an over active zeal in friends is apt to beget a like spirit in antagonists. The transition from a moderate opposition against an establishment, to an entire acquiescence in it, is easy and insensible.

There are many invincible arguments which should induce the malecontent party to acquiesce entirely in the present settlement of the constitution. They now find, that the spirit of civil liberty, though at first connected with religious fanaticism, could purge itself from that pollution, and appear under a more genuine and engaged aspect, a friend to toleration, and encourager of all the enlarged and generous sentiments that do honour to human nature. They may observe, that

the popular claims could stop at a proper period ; and, after retrenching the high claims of prerogative, could still maintain a due respect to monarchy, the nobility, and to all ancient institutions. Above all, they must be sensible, that the very principle which made the strength of their party, and from which it derived its chief authority, has now deserted them, and gone over to their antagonists. The plan of liberty is settled ; its happy effects are proved by experience ; a long tract of time has given it stability ; and whoever would attempt to overturn it, and to recall the past government or abdicated family, would, besides other more criminal imputations, be exposed, in their turn, to the reproach of faction and innovation. While they peruse the history of past events, they ought to reflect, both that those rights of the crown are long since annihilated, and that the tyranny, and violence, and oppression, to which they often give rise, are ills from which the established liberty of the constitution has now at last happily protected the people. These reflections will prove a better security to our freedom and privileges than to deny, contrary to the clearest evidence of facts, that such regal powers ever had an existence. There is not a more effectual method of betraying a cause than to lay the stress of the argument on a wrong place, and, by disputing an untenable post, inure the adversaries to success and victory.

## ESSAY XV

### OF THE PROTESTANT SUCCESSION

I suppose, that if a Member of Parliament, in the reign of King William or Queen Anne, while the establishment of the *Protestant Succession* was yet uncertain, were deliberating concerning the party he would choose in that important question, and weighing, with impartiality, the advantages and disadvantages on each side, I believe the following particulars would have entered into his consideration

He would easily perceive the great advantage resulting from the restoration of the Stuart family, by which we should preserve the succession clear and undisputed, free from a pretender, with such a specious title as that of blood, which, with the multitude, is always the claim the strongest and most easily comprehended. It is in vain to say, as many have done, that the question with regard to *governors*, independent of *government*, is frivolous, and little worth disputing, much less fighting about. The generality of mankind never will enter into these sentiments, and it is much happier, I believe, for society, that they do not, but rather continue in their natural prepossessions. How could stability be preserved in any monarchical government (which, though perhaps not the best, is, and always has been, the most common of any), unless men had so passionate a regard for the true heir of their royal family, and even though he be weak in



understanding, or infirm in years, gave him so sensible a preference above persons the most accomplished in shining talents, or celebrated for great achievements? Would not every popular leader put in his claim at every vacancy, or even without any vacancy, and the kingdom become the theatre of perpetual wars and convulsions? The condition of the Roman empire, surely, was not in this respect much to be envied; nor is that of the *Eastern* nations, who pay little regard to the titles of their sovereign, but sacrifice them every day, to the caprice or inomentary humour of the populace or soldiery. It is but a foolish wisdom, which is so carefully displayed in undervaluing princes, and placing them on a level with the meanest of mankind. To be sure, an anatomist finds no more in the greatest monarch than in the lowest peasant or day-labourer; and a moralist may, perhaps, frequently find less. But what do all these reflections tend to? We all of us still retain these prejudices in favour of birth and family; and neither in our serious occupations, nor most careless amusements, can we ever get entirely rid of them. A tragedy that should represent the adventures of sailors, or porters, or even of private gentlemen, would presently disgust us; but one that introduces kings and princes, acquires in our eyes an air of importance and dignity. Or should a man be able, by his superior wisdom, to get entirely above such prepossessions, he would soon, by means of the same wisdom, again bring himself down to them for the sake of society, whose welfare he would perceive to be intimately connected with them. Far from endeavouring to undeceive the people in this particular, he would cherish such sentiments of reverence to their princes, as requisite to preserve a due subordination in society. And though the lives of twenty thousand men be often sacrificed to maintain a king in possession of his

throne, or preserve the right of succession undisturbed, he entertains no indignation at the loss, on pretence that every individual of these was, perhaps in himself, as valuable as the prince he served. He considers the consequences of violating the hereditary right of kings, consequences which may be felt for many centuries, while the loss of several thousand men brings so little prejudice to a large kingdom, that it may not be perceived a few years after.

The advantages of the Hanover succession are of an opposite nature and arise from this very circumstance, that it violates hereditary right, and places on the throne a prince to whom birth gave no title to that dignity. It is evident, from the history of this island, that the privileges of the people have, during near two centuries, been continually upon the increase, 1. by the division of the church lands, 2. by the alienations of the barons' estates, by the progress of trade, and above all 3. by the happiness of our situation, which, for a long time, gave us sufficient security, without any standing army or military establishment. On the contrary, public liberty has, almost in every other nation of Europe, been, during the same period, extremely on the decline; while the people were disgusted at the hardships of the old feudal militia, and rather chose to intrust their prince with mercenary armies, which he easily turned against themselves. It was nothing extraordinary, therefore, that some of our British sovereigns mistook the nature of the constitution, at least the genius of the people, and as they embraced all the favourable precedents left them by their ancestors, they overlooked all those which were contrary, and which supposed a limitation in our government. They were encouraged in this mistake, by the example of all the neighbouring princes, who, bearing the same title or appellation, and being

adorned with the same ensigns of authority, naturally led them to claim the same powers and prerogatives. It appears from the speeches and proclamations of James I., and the whole train of that prince's actions, as well as his son's, that he regarded the English "government" as a simple monarchy, and never imagined that any considerable part of his subjects entertained a contrary idea. This opinion made those monarchs discover their pretensions, without preparing any force to support them; and even without reserve or disguise, which are always employed by those who enter upon any new project, or endeavour to innovate in any government.<sup>1</sup> The flattery of courtiers further

<sup>1</sup> King James told his Parliament plainly, when they meddled in state affairs, "*Ne sutor ultra crepidam?*" He used also, at his table, in promiscuous companies, to advance his notions in a manner still more undisguised, as we may learn from a story told in the life of Mr. Waller, and which that poet used frequently to repeat. When Mr. Waller was young, he had the curiosity to go to Court, and he stood in the circle and saw King James dine; where, amongst other company, there sat at table two Bishops. The King openly and aloud proposed this question, *Whether he might not take his subjects' money when he had occasion for it, without all this formality of Parliament.* The one Bishop readily replied, "*God forbid you should not, for you are the breath of our nostrils.*" The other Bishop declined answering, and said he was not skilled in Parliamentary cases. But upon the King's urging him, and saying he would admit of no evasion, his Lordship replied very pleasantly, "*Why, then, I think your Majesty may lawfully take my brother's money, for he offers it.*" In Sir Walter Raleigh's Preface to the History of the World, there is this remarkable passage. "*Philip the II., by strong hand and main force, attempted to make himself not only an absolute monarch over the Netherlands, like unto the kings and sovereigns of England and France, but, Turk like, to tread under his feet all their natural and fundamental laws, privileges, and ancient rights.*" Spencer, speaking of some grants of the English Kings to the Irish corporations, says, "*All which, though at the time of their first grant they were tolerable and perhaps reasonable, yet now are most unreasonable and inconvenient.* But all these will easily be

confirmed their prejudices; and, above all, that of the clergy, who, from several passages of *Scripture*, and these wrested too, had erected a regular and avowed system of arbitrary power. The only method of destroying, at once, all these high claims and pretensions, was to depart from the true hereditary line, and choose a prince, who, being plainly a creature of the public, and receiving the crown on conditions, expressed and avowed, found his authority established on the same bottom with the privileges of the people. By electing him in the royal line, we cut off all hopes of ambitious subjects, who might, in future emergencies, disturb the government by their cabals and pretensions. By rendering the crown hereditary in his family, we avoided all the inconveniences of elective monarchy. and by excluding the lineal heir, we secured all our constitutional limitations, and rendered our government uniform, and of a piece. The people cherish monarchy, because protected by it the monarch favours liberty, because created by it. and thus every advantage is obtained by the new establishment, as far as human skill and wisdom can extend itself.

These are the separate advantages of fixing the succession, either in the house of Stuart, or in that of Hanover. There are also disadvantages in each establishment, which an impartial patriot would ponder and examine, in order to form a just judgment upon the whole.

cut off with the superior power of her Majesty's prerogative, against which her own grants are not to be pleaded or enforced' *State of Ireland*, page 1537, Edit 1706.

As these were very common, though not, perhaps, the universal notions of the times, the two first Princes of the House of Stuart were the more excusable for their mistake. And Rapin, the most judicious of historians, seems sometimes to treat them with too much severity upon account of it.

The disadvantages of the Protestant succession consist in the foreign dominions which are possessed by the princes of the Hanover line, and which, it might be supposed, would engage us in the intrigues and wars of the Continent, and lose us, in some measure, the inestimable advantage we possess, of being surrounded and guarded by the sea, which we command. The disadvantages of recalling the abdicated family consist chiefly in their religion, which is more prejudicial to society than that established among us; is contrary to it, and affords no toleration, or peace, or security, to any other communion.

It appears to me, that these advantages and disadvantages are allowed on both sides; at least, by every one who is at all susceptible of argument or reasoning. No subject, however loyal, pretends to deny, that the disputed title and foreign dominions of the present royal family are a loss. Nor is there any partisan of the Stuarts but will confess, that the claim of hereditary, indefeasible right, and the Roman Catholic religion, are also disadvantages in that family. It belongs, therefore, to a philosopher alone, who is of neither party, to put all the circumstances in the scale, and assign to each of them its proper poise and influence. Such a one will readily at first acknowledge, that all political questions are infinitely complicated, and that there scarcely ever occurs in any deliberation, a choice which is either purely good, or purely ill. Consequences, mixed and varied, may be foreseen to flow from every measure: and many consequences, unforeseen, do always, in fact, result from every one. Hesitation, and reserve, and suspense, are therefore the only sentiments he brings to this essay or trial. Or, if he indulges any passion, it is that of derision against the ignorant multitude, who are always clamorous and dogmatical, even in the nicest questions, of which, from want of temper, perhaps still

more than of understanding, they are altogether unfit judges.

But to say something more determinate on this head, the following reflections will, I hope, show the temper, if not the understanding, of a philosopher.

Were we to judge merely by first appearances, and by past experience, we must allow that the advantages of a parliamentary title in the house of Hanover are greater than those of an undisputed hereditary title in the house of Stuart, and that our fathers acted wisely in preferring the former to the latter. So long as the house of Stuart ruled in Great Britain, which, with some interruption, was above eighty years, the government was kept in a continual fever, by the contention between the privileges of the people and the prerogatives of the crown. If arms were dropped, the noise of disputes continued: or if these were silenced, jealousy still corroded the heart, and threw the nation into an unnatural ferment and disorder. And while we were thus occupied in domestic disputes, a foreign power, dangerous to public liberty, erected itself in Europe, without any opposition from us, and even sometimes with our assistance.

But during these last sixty years, when a parliamentary establishment has taken place; whatever factions may have prevailed, either among the people or in public assemblies, the whole force of our constitution has always fallen in one scale, and an uninterrupted harmony has been preserved between our princes and our parliaments. Public liberty, with internal peace and order, has flourished almost without interruption: trade and manufactures, and agriculture, have increased: the arts, and sciences, and philosophy, have been cultivated. Even religious parties have been necessitated to lay aside their mutual rancour; and the glory of the nation has spread itself all over Europe; derived



more pernicious maxim of never paying off our incumbrances? Such fatal measures would not probably have been embraced, had it not been to secure a precarious establishment.<sup>1</sup>

But to convince us, that an hereditary title is to be embraced rather than a parliamentary one, which is not supported by any other views or motives, a man needs only transport himself back to the era of the Restoration, and suppose that he had had a seat in that parliament which recalled the royal family, and put a period to the greatest disorders that ever arose from the opposite pretensions of prince and people. What would have been thought of one that had proposed, at that time, to set aside Charles II. and settle the crown on the Duke of York or Gloucester, merely in order to exclude all high claims, like those of their father and grandfather? Would not such a one have been regarded as an extravagant projector, who loved dangerous remedies, and could tamper and play with a government and national constitution, like a quack with a sickly patient.<sup>2</sup>

In reality, the reason assigned by the nation for excluding the race of Stuart, and so many other branches of the royal family, is not on account of

<sup>1</sup> Those who consider how universal this pernicious practice of funding has become all over Europe, may perhaps dispute this last opinion. But we lay under less necessity than other states.

<sup>2</sup> The advantages which result from a parliamentary title, preferably to an hereditary one, though they are great, are too refined ever to enter into the conception of the vulgar. The bulk of mankind would never allow them to be sufficient for committing what would be regarded as an injustice to the Prince. They must be supported by some gross, popular, and familiar topics; and wise men, though convinced of their force, would reject them, in compliance with the weakness and prejudices of the people. An encroaching tyrant, or deluded bigot alone, by his misconduct, is able to enrage the nation, and render practicable what was always, perhaps, desirable.



their hereditary title, (a reason which would, to vulgar apprehensions, have appeared altogether absurd,) but on account of their religion, which leads us to compare the disadvantages above mentioned in each establishment.

I confess that, considering the matter in general, it were much to be wished that our prince had no foreign dominions, and could confine all his attention to the government of the island. For not to mention some real inconveniences that may result from territories on the Continent, they afford such a handle for calumny and defamation, as is greedily seized by the people, always disposed to think ill of their superiors. It must, however, be acknowledged, that Hanover is, perhaps, the spot of ground in Europe the least inconvenient for a King of England. It lies in the heart of Germany, at a distance from the great powers, which are our natural rivals: it is protected by the laws of the empire, as well as by the arms of its own sovereign: and it serves only to connect us more closely with the House of Austria, our natural ally.<sup>1</sup>

The religious persuasion of the house of Stuart is an inconvenience of a much deeper die, and would threaten us with much more dismal consequences. The Roman Catholic religion, with its train of priests and friars, is more expensive than ours; even though unaccompanied with its natural attendants of

<sup>1</sup> In the last war, it has been of service to us, by furnishing us with a considerable body of auxiliary troops, the bravest and most faithful in the world. The Elector of Hanover is the only considerable prince in the empire who has drove no separate end, and has raised up no stale pretensions, during the late commotions of Europe; but has acted all along with the dignity of a King of Britain. And, ever since the accession of that family, it would be difficult to show any harm we have ever received from the electoral dominions, except that short disgust in 1718 with Charles the 12th, who, regulating himself by maxims very different from those of other princes, made a personal quarrel of every public injury.

inquisitors, and stakes, and gibbets, it is less tolerating and, not content with dividing the sacerdotal from the regal office (which must be prejudicial to any state), it bestows the former on a foreigner, who has always a separate interest from that of the public, and may often have an opposite one.

But were this religion ever so advantageous to society, it is contrary to that which is established among us, and which is likely to keep possession, for a long time, of the minds of the people. And though it is much to be hoped, that the progress of reason will, by degrees, abate the acrimony of opposite religions all over Europe, yet the spirit of moderation has as yet, made too slow advances to be entirely trusted.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, upon the whole, the advantages of the settlement in the family of Stuart, which frees us from a disputed title, seem to bear some proportion with those of the settlement in the family of Hanover, which frees us from the claims of prerogative, but, at the same time, its disadvantages, by placing on the throne a Roman Catholic, are greater than those of the other establishment, in settling the crown on a foreign prince. What party an impartial patriot in the reign of King William or Queen Anne, would have chosen amidst these opposite views, may perhaps to some appear hard to determine.<sup>2</sup>

But the settlement in the house of Hanover has

<sup>1</sup> "The conflict of the Saxon family, where the same person can be a Catholic King and a Protestant Protector, is perhaps the first instance in modern times of so reasonable and prudent a behaviour: and the gradual progress of the Catholic superstition does even there prognosticate a speedy alteration. After which it is justly to be apprehended that persecutions will put a speedy period to the Protestant religion in the place of its nativity."

<sup>2</sup> "For my part, I esteem liberty so invaluable a blessing in society, that whatever favours its progress and security, can scarce be too fondly cherished by every one who is a lover of human kind."



## ESSAY XVI

### IDEA OF A PERFECT COMMONWEALTH<sup>1</sup>

It is not with forms of government, as with other artificial contrivances, where an old engine may be rejected, if we can discover another more accurate and commodious, or where trials may easily be made, even though the success be doubtful. An established government has an infinite advantage by that very circumstance, of its being established; the bulk of mankind being governed by authority, not reason, and never attributing authority in any thing that has not the recommendation of antiquity.

To tamper, therefore, in this affair, or try experiments merely upon the credit of supposed argument and philosophy, can never be the part of a wise magistrate, who will bear a reverence to what carries the marks of age; and though he may attempt some improvements for the public good, yet will he adjust his innovations as much as possible to the ancient fabric, and preserve entire the chief pillars and supports of the constitution.

The mathematicians in Europe have been much divided concerning that figure of a ship which is the most commodious for sailing; and Huygens,

<sup>1</sup> "Of all mankind there are none so pernicious as political projectors, if they have power, nor so ridiculous if they want it: as on the other hand a wise politician is the most beneficial character in nature, if accompanied with authority, and the most innocent, and not altogether useless, even if deprived of it."

who at last determined the controversy, is justly thought to have obliged the learned as well as commercial world, though Columbus had sailed to America, and Sir Francis Drake made the tour of the world, without any such discovery. As one form of government must be allowed more perfect than another, independent of the manners and humours of particular men, why may we not inquire what is the most perfect of all, though the common botched and inaccurate governments seem to serve the purposes of society, and though it be not so easy to establish a new system of government, as to build a vessel upon a new construction? The subject is surely the most worthy of curiosity of any the wit of man can possibly devise. And who knows, if this controversy were fixed by the universal consent of the wise and learned, but, in some future age, an opportunity might be afforded of reducing the theory to practice, either by a dissolution of some old government, or by the combination of men to form a new one, in some distant part of the world? In all cases, it must be advantageous to know what is the most perfect in the kind, that we may be able to bring any real constitution or form of government as near it as possible, by such gentle alterations and innovations as may not give too great disturbance to society.

All I pretend to in the present Essay is, to revive this subject of speculation; and therefore I shall deliver my sentiments in as few words as possible. A long dissertation on that head would not, I apprehend, be very acceptable to the public, who will be apt to regard such disquisitions both as useless and chimerical.

All plans of government, which suppose great reformation in the manners of mankind, are plainly imaginary. Of this nature, are the *Republic* of Plato, and the *Utopia* of Sir Thomas More. The

*Oceana* is the only valuable model of a commonwealth that has yet been offered to the public

The chief defects of the *Oceana* seem to be these  
*First*, Its rotation is inconvenient, by throwing men, of whatever abilities, by intervals, out of public employment. *Secondly*, Its *Agrarian* is impracticable. Men will soon learn the art which was practised in ancient Rome, of concealing their possessions under other people's names, till at last the abuse will become so common, that they will throw off even the appearance of restraint. *Thirdly*, The *Oceana* provides not a sufficient security for liberty, or the redress of grievances. The senate must propose, and the people consent, by which means the senate have not only a negative upon the people, but, what is of much greater consequence, their negative goes before the votes of the people. Were the king's negative of the same nature in the English constitution, and could he prevent any bill from coming into parliament, he would be an absolute monarch. As his negative follows the votes of the houses, it is of little consequence, such a difference is there in the manner of placing the same thing. When a popular bill has been debated in parliament, is brought to maturity, all its conveniences and inconveniences weighed and balanced, if afterwards it be presented for the royal assent, few princes will venture to reject the unanimous desire of the people. But could the king crush a disagreeable bill in embryo (as was the case for some time in the Scottish parliament, by means of the Lords of the Articles), the British government would have no balance, nor would grievances ever be redressed, and it is certain, that exorbitant power proceeds not in any government from new laws, so much as from neglecting to remedy the abuses which frequently rise from the old ones. A government, says Machiavel, must often be brought back to its original principles. It appears then, that in the

*Oceana*, the whole legislature may be said to rest in the senate; which Harrington would own to be an inconvenient form of government, especially after the *Agrarian* is abolished.

Here is a form of government, to which I cannot, in theory, discover any considerable objection.

Let Great Britain and Ireland, or any territory of equal extent, be divided into 100 counties, and each county into 100 parishes, making in all 10,000. If the country proposed to be erected into a commonwealth be of more narrow extent, we may diminish the number of counties; but never bring them below thirty. If it be of greater extent, it were better to enlarge the parishes, or throw more parishes into a county, than increase the number of counties.

Let all the freeholders of twenty pounds a year in the county, and all the householders worth 500 pounds in the town parishes, meet annually in the parish church, and choose by ballot, some freeholder of the county for their member, whom we shall call the *county representative*.

Let the 100 county representatives, two days after their election, meet in the county town, and choose by ballot, from their own body, ten county *magistrates*, and one senator. There are, therefore, in the whole commonwealth, 100 senators, 1,100 county magistrates, and 10,000 county representatives; for we shall bestow on all senators the authority of county magistrates, and on all county magistrates the authority of county representatives.

Let the senators meet in the capital, and be endowed with the whole executive power of the commonwealth; the power of peace and war, of giving orders to generals, admirals, and ambassadors; and, in short, all the prerogatives of a British king, except his negative.

Let the county representatives meet in their particular counties, and possess the whole legislative power of the commonwealth, the greater number of

counties deciding the question, and where these are equal, let the senate have the casting vote

Every new law must first be debated in the senate, and though rejected by it, if ten senators insist and protest, it must be sent down to the counties. The senate, if they please, may join to the copy of the law their reasons for receiving or rejecting it

Because it would be troublesome to assemble all the county representatives for every trivial law that may be requisite, the senate have their choice of sending down the law either to the county magistrates or county representatives

The magistrates, though the law be referred to them, may, if they please, call the representatives, and submit the affair to their determination

Whether the law be referred by the senate to the county magistrates or representatives, a copy of it, and of the senate's reasons, must be sent to every representative eight days before the day appointed for the assembling, in order to deliberate concerning it. And though the determination be, by the senate, referred to the magistrates, if five representatives of the county order the magistrates to assemble the whole court of representatives, and submit the affair to their determination, they must obey

Either the county magistrates or representatives may give, to the senator of the county, the copy of a law to be proposed to the senate, and if five counties concur in the same order, the law, though refused by the senate, must come either to the county magistrates or representatives, as is contained in the order of the five counties

Any twenty counties, by a vote either of their magistrates or representatives, may throw any man out of all public offices for a year. Thirty counties for three years

The senate has a power of throwing out any member or number of members of its own body, not to be reelected for that year. The senate cannot



throw out twice in a year the senator of the same county.

The power of the old senate continues for three weeks after the annual election of the county representatives. Then all the new senators are shut up in a conclave like the cardinals ; and by an intricate ballot, such as that of Venice or Malta, they choose the following magistrates ; a protector, who represents the dignity of the commonwealth, and presides in the senate ; two secretaries of state : these six councils, a council of state, a council of religion and learning, a council of trade, a council of laws, a council of war, a council of the admiralty, each council consisting of five persons ; together with six commissioners of the treasury, and a first commissioner. All these must be senators. The senate also names all the ambassadors to foreign courts, who may either be senators or not.

The senate may continue any or all of these, but must reëlect them every year.

The protector and two secretaries have session and suffrage in the council of state. The business of that council is all foreign politics. The council of state has session and suffrage in all the other councils.

The council of religion and learning inspects the universities and clergy. That of trade inspects every thing that may affect commerce. That of laws inspects all the abuses of law by the inferior magistrates, and examines what improvements may be made of the municipal law. That of war inspects the militia and its discipline, magazines, stores, etc. ; and when the republic is in war, examines into the proper orders for generals. The council of admiralty has the same power with regard to the navy, together with the nomination of the captains and all inferior officers.

None of these councils can give orders themselves, except where they receive such powers from the

senate. In other cases, they must communicate every thing to the senate.

When the senate is under adjournment, any of the councils may assemble it before the day appointed for its meeting.

Besides these councils or courts, there is another called the court of *competitors*; which is thus constituted. If any candidates for the office of senator have more votes than a third of the representatives, that candidate who has most votes, next to the senator elected, becomes incapable for one year of all public offices, even of being a magistrate or representative; but he takes his seat in the court of competitors. Here then is a court which may sometimes consist of a hundred members, sometimes have no members at all; and by that means be for a year abolished.

The court of competitors has no power in the commonwealth. It has only the inspection of public accounts, and the accusing of any man before the senate. If the senate acquit him, the court of competitors may, if they please, appeal to the people, either magistrates or representatives. Upon that appeal, the magistrates or representatives meet on the day appointed by the court of competitors, and choose in each county three persons, from which number every senator is excluded. These, to the number of 300, meet in the capital, and bring the person accused to a new trial.

The court of competitors may propose any law to the senate; and if refused, may appeal to the people, that is, to the magistrates or representatives, who examine it in their counties. Every senator, who is thrown out of the senate by a vote of the court, takes his seat in the court of competitors.

The senate possesses all the judicative authority of the House of Lords, that is, all the appeals from the inferior courts. It likewise appoints the Lord Chancellor and all the officers of the law.

Every county is a kind of republic within itself, and the representatives may make by-laws, which have no authority till three months after they are voted. A copy of the law is sent to the senate, and to every other county. The senate, or any single county, may at any time annul any by-law of another county.

The representatives have all the authority of the British justices of the peace in trials, commitments, etc.

The magistrates have the appointment of all the officers of the revenue in each county. All causes with regard to the revenue are carried ultimately by appeal before the magistrates. They pass the accounts of all the officers; but must have their own accounts examined and passed at the end of the year by the representatives.

The magistrates name rectors or ministers to all the parishes.

The Presbyterian government is established; and the highest ecclesiastical court is an assembly or synod of all the presbyters of the county. The magistrates may take any cause from this court, and determine it themselves.

The magistrates may try, and depose or suspend any presbyter.

The militia is established in imitation of that of Switzerland, which, being well known, we shall not insist upon it. It will only be proper to make this addition, that an army of 20,000 men be annually drawn out by rotation, paid and encamped during six weeks in summer, that the duty of a camp may not be altogether unknown.

The magistrates appoint all the colonels, and downwards. The senate all upwards. During war, the general appoints the colonel and downwards, and his commission is good for a twelvemonth. But after that, it must be confirmed by the magistrates of the county to which the regiment belongs. The

magistrates may break any officer in the county regiment; and the senate may do the same to a military officer in the service. If the magistrates do not think proper to confirm the general's choice, they may appoint another officer in the place of him they reject.

All crimes are tried within the county by the magistrates and a jury, but the senate can stop any trial, and bring it before themselves.

Any county may indict any man before the senate for any crime.

The protector, the two secretaries, the council of state, with any five or more that the senate appoints, are possessed, on extraordinary emergencies, of dictatorial power for six months.

The protector may pardon any person condemned by the inferior courts.

In time of war, no officer of the army that is in the field can have any civil office in the commonwealth.

The capital, which we shall call London, may be allowed four members in the senate. It may therefore be divided into four counties. The representatives of each of these choose one senator and ten magistrates. There are therefore in the city four senators, forty four magistrates, and four hundred representatives. The magistrates have the same authority as in the counties. The representatives also have the same authority; but they never meet in one general court. they give their votes in their particular county or division of hundreds.

When they enact any law, the greater number of counties or divisions determines the matter. And where these are equal, the magistrates have the casting vote.

The magistrates choose the mayor, sheriff, recorder, and other officers of the city.

In the commonwealth, no representative, magistrate, or senator as such, has any salary. The

protector, secretaries, councils, and ambassadors, have salaries.

The first year in every century is set apart for correcting all inequalities which time may have produced in the representative. This must be done by the legislature.

The following political aphorisms may explain the reason of these orders.

The lower sort of people and small proprietors are good enough judges of one not very distant from them in rank or habitation ; and therefore, in their parochial meetings, will probably choose the best, or nearly the best representative : but they are wholly unfit for country meetings, and for electing into the higher offices of the republic. Their ignorance gives the grandees an opportunity of deceiving them.

Ten thousand, even though they were not annually elected, are a basis large enough for any free government. It is true, the nobles in Poland are more than 10,000, and yet these oppress the people. But as power always continues there in the same persons and families, this makes them in a manner a different nation from the people. Besides, the nobles are there united under a few heads of families.

All free governments must consist of two councils, a lesser and a greater, or, in other words, of a senate and people. The people, as Harrington observes, would want wisdom without the senate : the senate, without the people, would want honesty.

A large assembly of 1,000, for instance, to represent the people, if allowed to debate, would fall into disorder. If not allowed to debate, the senate has a negative upon them, and the worst kind of negative, that before resolution.

Here, therefore, is an inconvenience which no government has yet fully remedied, but which is the easiest to be remedied in the world. If the

people debate, all is confusion: if they do not debate, they can only resolve, and then the senate carries for them. Divide the people into many separate bodies, and then they may debate with safety, and every inconvenience seems to be prevented.

Cardinal de Retz says, that all numerous assemblies, however composed, are mere mob, and swayed in their debates by the least motive. This we find confirmed by daily experience. When an absurdity strikes a member, he conveys it to his neighbour, and so on till the whole be infected. Separate this great body, and though every member be only of middling sense, it is not probable that any thing but reason can prevail over the whole. Influence and example being removed, good sense will always get the better of bad among a number of people.

There are two things to be guarded against in every senate, its combination and its division. Its combination is most dangerous, and against this inconvenience we have provided the following remedies. 1. The great dependence of the senators on the people by annual elections, and that not by an undistinguished rabble, like the English electors, but by men of fortune and education. 2. The small power they are allowed. They have few offices to dispose of. Almost all are given by the magistrates in the counties. 3. The court of competitors, which, being composed of men that are their rivals next to them in interest, and uneasy in their present situation, will be sure to take all advantages against them.

The division of the senate is prevented, 1. By the smallness of their number. 2. As faction supposes a combination in a separate interest, it is prevented by their dependence on the people. 3. They have a power of expelling any factious member. It is true, when another member of the same spirit comes from the country, they have no power of

expelling him : nor is it fit they should, for that shows the humour to be in the people, and may possibly arise from some ill conduct in public affairs.

4. Almost any man, in a senate so regularly chosen by the people, may be supposed fit for any civil office. It would be proper, therefore, for the senate to form some *general* resolutions with regard to the disposing of offices among the members : which resolutions would not confine them in critical times, when extraordinary parts on the one hand, or extraordinary stupidity on the other, appears in any senator ; but they would be sufficient to prevent intrigue and faction, by making the disposal of the offices a thing of course. For instance, let it be a resolution, That no man shall enjoy any office till he has sat four years in the senate : that, except ambassadors, no man shall be in office two years following : that no man shall attain the higher offices but through the lower : that no man shall be protector twice, etc. The senate of Venice govern themselves by such resolutions.

In foreign politics the interest of the senate can scarcely ever be divided from that of the people ; and therefore it is fit to make the senate absolute with regard to them, otherwise there could be no secrecy or refined policy. Besides, without money no alliance can be executed, and the senate is still sufficiently dependent. Not to mention, that the legislative power, being always superior to the executive, the magistrates or representatives may interpose whenever they think proper.

The chief support of the British government is the opposition of interest : but that, though in the main serviceable, breeds endless factions. In the foregoing plan, it does all the good without any of the harm. The *competitors* have no power of controlling the senate : they have only the power of accusing, and appealing to the people.

It is necessary, likewise, to prevent both

combination and division in the thousand magistrates. This is done sufficiently by the separation of places and interests.

But, lest that should not be sufficient, their dependence on the 10,000 for their elections serves to the same purpose.

Nor is that all, for the 10,000 may resume the power whenever they please, and not only when they all please, but when any five of a hundred please, which will happen upon the very first suspicion of a separate interest.

The 10,000 are too large a body either to unite or divide, except when they meet in one place, and fall under the guidance of ambitious leaders. Not to mention their annual election, by the whole body of the people, that are of any consideration.

A small commonwealth is the happiest government in the world within itself, because every thing lies under the eye of the rulers: but it may be subdued by great force from without. This scheme seems to have all the advantages both of a great and a little commonwealth.

Every county law may be annulled either by the senate or another county, because that shows an opposition of interest: in which case no part ought to decide for itself. The matter must be referred to the whole, which will best determine what agrees with general interest.

As to the clergy and militia, the reasons of these orders are obvious. Without the dependence of the clergy on the civil magistrates, and without a militia, it is in vain to think that any free government will ever have security or stability.

In many governments, the inferior magistrates have no rewards but what arise from their ambition, vanity, or public spirit. The salaries of the French judges amount not to the interest of the sums they pay for their offices. The Dutch burgomasters have little more immediate profit than the English



justices of peace, or the members of the House of Commons formerly. But lest any should suspect that this would beget negligence in the administration (which is little to be feared, considering the natural ambition of mankind), let the magistrates have competent salaries. The senators have access to so many honourable and lucrative offices, that their attendance needs not be bought. There is little attendance required of the representatives.

That the foregoing plan of government is practicable, no one can doubt who considers the resemblance that it bears to the commonwealth of the United Provinces, a wise and renowned government. The alterations in the present scheme seem all evidently for the better. 1. The representation is more equal. 2. The unlimited power of the burgomasters in the towns, which forms a perfect aristocracy in the Dutch commonwealth, is corrected by a well-tempered democracy, in giving to the people the annual election of the county representatives. 3. The negative, which every province and town has upon the whole body of the Dutch Republic, with regard to alliances, peace and war, and the imposition of taxes, is here removed. 4. The counties, in the present plan, are not so independent of each other, nor do they form separate bodies so much as the seven provinces, where the jealousy and envy of the smaller provinces and towns against the greater, particularly Holland and Amsterdam, have frequently disturbed the government. 5. Larger powers, though of the safest kind, are intrusted to the senate than the States-General possess; by which means the former may become more expeditious and secret in their resolutions than it is possible for the latter.

The chief alterations that could be made on the British government, in order to bring it to the most perfect model of limited monarchy, seem to be the following. *First*, the plan of Cromwell's parliament

ought to be restored, by making the representation equal, and by allowing none to vote in the county elections who possess not a property of 200<sup>l</sup> value. *Secondly*, As such a House of Commons would be too weighty for a frail House of Lords, like the present the Bishops, and Scotch Peers, ought to be removed the number of the upper house ought to be raised to three or four hundred the seats not hereditary, but during life they ought to have the election of their own members and no commoner should be allowed to refuse a seat that was offered him. By this means the House of Lords would consist entirely of the men of chief credit, abilities, and interest in the nation, and every turbulent leader in the House of Commons might be taken off, and connected by interest with the House of Peers. Such an aristocracy would be an excellent barrier both to the monarchy and against it. At present, the balance of our government depends in some measure on the abilities and behaviour of the sovereign, which are variable and uncertain circumstances.

This plan of limited monarchy, however corrected, seems still liable to three great inconveniences. *First*, It removes not entirely, though it may soften the parties of court and country. *Secondly*, The king's personal character must still have great influence on the government. *Thirdly*, The sword is in the hands of a single person, who will always neglect to discipline the militia in order to have a pretence for keeping up a standing army.<sup>1</sup>

We shall conclude this subject, with observing the falsehood of the common opinion, that no large

<sup>1</sup> It is evident that this is a mortal distemper in the British government, of which it must at last inevitably perish. I must however confess, that Sweden seems in some measure, to have remedied this inconvenience, and to have a militia along with its limited monarchy, as well as a standing army, which is less dangerous than the British

state, such as France or Great Britain, could ever be modelled into a commonwealth, but that such a form of government can only take place in a city or small territory. The contrary seems probable. Though it is more difficult to form a republican government in an extensive country than in a city, there is more facility when once it is formed, of preserving it steady and uniform, without tumult and faction. It is not easy for the distant parts of a large state to combine in any plan of free government; but they easily conspire in the esteem and reverence for a single person, who, by means of this popular favour, may seize the power, and forcing the more obstinate to submit, may establish a monarchical government. On the other hand, a city readily concurs in the same notions of government, the natural equality of property favours liberty, and the nearness of habitation enables the citizens mutually to assist each other. Even under absolute princes, the subordinate government of cities is commonly republican; while that of counties and provinces is monarchical. But these same circumstances, which facilitate the erection of commonwealths in cities, render their constitution more frail and uncertain. Democracies are turbulent. For, however the people may be separated or divided into small parties, either in their votes or elections, their near habitation in a city will always make the force of popular tides and currents very sensible. Aristocracies are better adapted for peace and order, and accordingly were most admired by ancient writers; but they are jealous and oppressive. In a large government, which is modelled with masterly skill, there is compass and room enough to refine the democracy, from the lower people who may be admitted into the first elections, or first concoction of the commonwealth, to the higher magistrates who direct all the movements. At the same time, the parts are so distant and remote, that it is very

difficult, either by intrigue, prejudice, or passion, to hurry them into any measures against the public interest.

It is needless to inquire, whether such a government would be immortal. I allow the justness of the poet's exclamation on the endless projects of human race, *Man and for ever!* The world itself probably is not immortal. Such consuming plagues may arise as would leave even a perfect government a weak prey to its neighbours. We know not to what length enthusiasm, or other extraordinary movements of the human mind, may transport men to the neglect of all order and public good. Where difference of interest is removed, whimsical unaccountable factions often arise, from personal favour or enmity. Perhaps rust may grow to the springs of the most accurate political machine, and disorder its motions. Lastly, extensive conquests, when pursued, must be the ruin of every free government; and of the more perfect governments sooner than of the imperfect; because of the very advantages which the former possess above the latter. And though such a state ought to establish a fundamental law against conquests, yet republics have ambition as well as individuals, and present interest makes men forgetful of their posterity. It is a sufficient incitement to human endeavours, that such a government would flourish for many ages; without pretending to bestow, on any work of man, that immortality which the Almighty seems to have refused to his own productions.



OF MIRACLES



## OF MIRACLES

### PART I

THERE is, in Dr Tillotson's writings, an argument against the *real presence*, which is as concise, and elegant, and strong, as any argument can possibly be supposed against a doctrine so little worthy of a serious refutation. It is acknowledged on all hands, says that learned prelate, that the authority, either of the Scripture or of tradition, is founded merely on the testimony of the Apostles, who were eye-witnesses to those miracles of our Saviour, by which he proved his divine mission. Our evidence, then, for the truth of the Christian religion, is less than the evidence for the truth of our senses; because, even in the first authors of our religion, it was no greater; and it is evident it must diminish in passing from them to their disciples, nor can any one rest such confidence in their testimony as in the immediate object of his senses. But a weaker evidence can never destroy a stronger, and therefore, were the doctrine of the real presence ever so clearly revealed in Scripture, it were directly contrary to the rules of just reasoning to give our assent to it. It contradicts sense, though both the Scripture and tradition, on which it is supposed to be built, carry not such evidence with them as sense, when they are considered merely as external evidences, and are not brought home to every one's breast by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit.

Nothing is so convenient as a decisive argument



of this kind, which must at least *silence* the most arrogant bigotry and superstition, and free us from their impertinent solicitations. I flatter myself that I have discovered an argument of a like nature, which, if just, will, with the wise and learned, be an everlasting check to all kinds of superstitious delusion, and consequently will be useful as long as the world endures; for so long, I presume, will the accounts of miracles and prodigies be found in all history, sacred and profane.

Though experience be our only guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact, it must be acknowledged, that this guide is not altogether infallible, but in some cases is apt to lead us into errors. One who in our climate should expect better weather in any week of June than in one of December, would reason justly and conformably to experience; but it is certain that he may happen, in the event, to find himself mistaken. However, we may observe that, in such a case, he would have no cause to complain of experience, because it commonly informs us beforehand of the uncertainty, by that contrariety of events which we may learn from a diligent observation. All effects follow not with like certainty from their supposed causes. Some events are found, in all countries and all ages, to have been constantly conjoined together: others are found to have been more variable, and sometimes to disappoint our expectations; so that in our reasonings concerning matter of fact, there are all imaginable degrees of assurance, from the highest certainty to the lowest species of moral evidence.

A wise man, therefore, proportions his belief to the evidence. In such conclusions as are founded on an infallible experience, he expects the event with the last degree of assurance, and regards his past experience as a full *proof* of the future existence of that event. In other cases he proceeds with more caution: he weighs the opposite experiments: he

considers which side is supported by the greater number of experiments: to that side he inclines with doubt and hesitation; and when at last he fixes his judgment, the evidence exceeds not what we properly call *probability*. All probability, then, supposes an opposition of experiments and observations, where the one side is found to overbalance the other, and to produce a degree of evidence proportioned to the superiority. A hundred instances or experiments on one side, and fifty on another, afford a doubtful expectation of any event; though a hundred uniform experiments, with only one that is contradictory, reasonably beget a pretty strong degree of assurance. In all cases, we must balance the opposite experiments, where they are opposite, and deduct the smaller number from the greater, in order to know the exact force of the superior evidence.

To apply these principles to a particular instance; we may observe, that there is no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life, than that which is derived from the testimony of men, and the reports of eyewitnesses and spectators. This species of reasoning, perhaps, one may deny to be founded on the relation of cause and effect. I shall not dispute about a word. It will be sufficient to observe, that our assurance in any argument of this kind is derived from no other principle than our observation of the veracity of human testimony, and of the usual conformity of facts to the report of witnesses. It being a general maxim that no objects have any discoverable connection together, and that all the inferences which we can draw from one to another, are founded merely on our experience of their constant and regular conjunction, it is evident that we ought not to make an exception to this maxim in favour of human testimony, whose connection with any event seems, in itself, as little necessary as any other. Were not the memory tenacious to a certain degree;

and which bore so little analogy to those events of which he had had constant and uniform experience. Though they were not contrary to his experience, they were not conformable to it.<sup>1</sup>

But in order to increase the probability against the testimony of witnesses, let us suppose that the fact which they affirm, instead of being only marvellous, is really miraculous; and suppose also, that the testimony, considered apart and in itself, amounts to an entire proof, in that case there is proof against proof, of which the strongest must prevail, but still with a diminution of its force, in proportion to that of its antagonist.

A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. Why is it more than probable that all men must

<sup>1</sup> No Indian, it is evident, could have experience that water did not freeze in cold climates. This is placing nature in a situation quite unknown to him; and it is impossible for him to tell *a priori* what will result from it. It is making a new experiment, the consequence of which is always uncertain. One may sometimes conjecture from analogy what will follow; but still this is but conjecture. And it must be confessed, that, in the present case of freezing, the event follows, contrary to the rules of analogy, and is such as a rational Indian would not look for. The operations of cold upon water are not gradual, according to the degrees of cold; but whenever it comes to the freezing point, the water passes in a moment, from the utmost liquidity to perfect hardness. Such an event, therefore, may be denominated *extraordinary*, and requires a pretty strong testimony, to render it credible to people in a warm climate: but still it is not *miraculous*, nor contrary to uniform experience of the course of nature in cases where all the circumstances are the same. The inhabitants of Sumatra have always seen water fluid in their own climate, and the freezing of their rivers ought to be deemed a prodigy: but they never saw water in *Museovy* during the winter; and therefore they cannot reasonably be positive what would there be the consequence.

die; that lead cannot, of itself, remain suspended in the air; that fire consumes wood, and is extinguished by water; unless it be that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a violation of these laws, or, in other words, a miracle to prevent them? Nothing is esteemed a miracle, if it ever happen in the common course of nature. It is no miracle that a man, seemingly in good health, should die on a sudden; because such a kind of death, though more unusual than any other, has yet been frequently observed to happen. But it is a miracle that a dead man should come to life; because that has never been observed in any age or country. There must, therefore, be an uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as in uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full *proof*, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle; nor can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an opposite proof, which is superior.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes an event may not, in itself, seem to be contrary to the laws of nature, and yet, if it were real, it might, by reason of some circumstances, be denominated a miracle, because, in fact, it is contrary to these laws. Thus if a person, claiming a divine authority, should command a sick person to be well, a healthful man to fall down dead, the clouds to pour rain, the winds to blow in short should order many natural events which immediately follow upon his command, these might justly be esteemed miracles, because they are really, in this case, contrary to the laws of nature. For if any suspicion remain, that the event and command concurred by accident, there is no miracle and no transgression of the laws of nature. If this suspicion be removed, there is evidently a miracle, and a transgression of these laws, because nothing can be more contrary to nature than that the voice or command of a man should have such an influence. A miracle may be accurately defined a *transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent*. A

The plain consequence is (and it is a general maxim worthy of our attention), "That no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to establish: and even in that case there is a mutual destruction of arguments, and the superior only gives us an assurance suitable to that degree of force which remains after deducting the inferior." When any one tells me that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself whether it be more probable that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact which he relates should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the other; and according to the superiority which I discover, I pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates, then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion.

## PART II

In the foregoing reasoning we have supposed, that the testimony upon which a miracle is founded, may possibly amount to entire proof, and that the falsehood of that testimony would be a real prodigy: but it is easy to show that we have been a great deal too liberal in our concession, and that there never was a miraculous event established on so full an evidence.

miracle may either be discovered by men or not. This alters not its nature and essence. The raising of a house or ship into the air is a visible miracle. The raising of a feather, when the wind wants ever so little of a force requisite for that purpose, is as real a miracle, though not so sensible with regard to us.





prophecies and supernatural events, which, in all ages, have been detected by contrary evidence, or which detect themselves by their absurdity, prove sufficiently the strong propensity of our kind to the extraordinary and marvellous, and ought reasonably to beg a suspension against all relations of this kind. This is our natural way of thinking, even with regard to the most common and most credible events. For instance, there is no kind of report which arises so easily, and spreads so quickly, especially in country places and provincial towns, as those concerning prodigies; in so much that two young persons of equal age have never seen each other twice, but the whole neighbourhood immediately joins them together. The pleasure of telling a piece of news so interesting, of propagating it, and of being the first reporters of it, spreads the intelligence; and this is so well known, that no man of sense gives attention to these reports till he find them confirmed by some greater evidence. Do not the same passions, and others still stronger, incline the generality of mankind to believe and report, with the greatest reverence and assurance, all religious miracles?

Thirdly, It forms a strong presumption against all supernatural and miraculous relations, that they are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations; or if a civilized people has ever given admission to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous ancestors, who transmitted them with that inviolable sanction and authority which always attend received opinions. When we peruse the first histories of all nations, we are apt to imagine ourselves transported into some new world, where the whole frame of nature is disjointed, and every element performs its operations in a different manner from what it does at present. Battles, revolutions, pestilence, famine, and death, are never the effect of those natural causes which we experience.



Prodigies, omens, oracles, judgments, quite obscure the few natural events that are intermingled with them. But as the former grow thinner every page, in proportion as we advance nearer the enlightened ages, we soon learn that there is nothing mysterious or supernatural in the case, but that all proceeds from the usual propensity of mankind towards the marvellous, and that, though this inclination may at intervals receive a check from sense and learning, it can never be thoroughly extirpated from human nature.

*It is strange*, a judicious reader is apt to say, upon the perusal of these wonderful historians, *that such prodigious events never happen in our days!* But it is nothing strange, I hope, that men should lie in all ages. You must surely have seen instances enough of that frailty. You have yourself heard many such marvellous relations started, which, being treated with scorn by all the wise and judicious, have at last been abandoned even by the vulgar. Be assured, that those renowned lies, which have spread and flourished to such a monstrous height, arose from like beginnings; but being sown in a more proper soil, shot up at last into prodigies almost equal to those which they relate.

It was a wise policy in that false prophet Alexander, who, though now forgotten, was once so famous, to lay the first scene of his impostures in Paphlagonia, where, as Lucian tells us, the people were extremely ignorant and stupid, and ready to swallow even the grossest delusion. People at a distance, who are weak enough to think the matter at all worthy inquiry, have no opportunity of receiving better information. The stories come magnified to them by a hundred circumstances. Fools are industrious in propagating the imposture; while the wise and learned are contented, in general, to deride its absurdity, without informing themselves of the particular facts by which it may be distinctly



I may add, as a *fourth* reason, which diminishes the authority of prodigies, that there is no testimony for any, even those which have not been expressly detected, that is not opposed by an infinite number of witnesses ; so that not only the miracle destroys the credit of testimony, but the testimony destroys itself. To make this the better understood, let us consider, that in matters of religion, whatever is different is contrary ; and that it is impossible the religions of ancient Rome, of Turkey, of Siam, and of China, should all of them be established on any solid foundation. Every miracle, therefore, pretended to have been wrought in any of these religions, (and all of them abound in miracles,) as its direct scope is to establish the particular system to which it is attributed ; so has it the same force, though more indirectly, to overthrow every other system. In destroying a rival system, it likewise destroys the credit of those miracles on which that system was established, so that all the prodigies of different religions are to be regarded as contrary facts, and the evidences of these prodigies, whether weak or strong, as opposite to each other. According to this method of reasoning, when we believe any miracle of Mahomet or his successors, we have for our warrant the testimony of a few barbarous Arabians : and, on the other hand, we are to regard the authority of Titus Livius, Plutarch, Tacitus, and, in short, of all the authors and witnesses, Grecian, Chinese, and Roman Catholic, who have related any miracle in their particular religion ; I say, we are to regard their testimony in the same to be wished that some of the accounts published by his followers and accomplices had remained. The opposition and contrast betwixt the character and conduct of the same man as drawn by a friend or an enemy, is as strong, even in common life, much more in these religious matters, as that betwixt any two men in the world ; betwixt Alexander and St. Paul, for instance. See a letter to Gilbert West, Esq., on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul.

light as if they had mentioned the Mahometan miracle, and had in express terms contradicted it, with the same certainty as they have for the miracle they relate. This argument may appear over subtle and refined, but is not in reality different from the reasoning of a judge, who supposes that the credit of two witnesses, maintaining a crime against any one, is destroyed by the testimony of two others, who affirm him to have been two hundred leagues distant at the same instant when the crime is said to have been committed.

One of the best attested miracles in all profane history, is that which Tacitus reports of Vespasian, who cured a blind man in Alexandria by means of his spittle, and a lame man by the mere touch of his foot, in obedience to a vision of the god Serapis, who had enjoined them to have recourse to the Emperor for these miraculous cures. The story may be seen in that fine historian, where every circumstance seems to add weight to the testimony, and might be displayed at large with all the force of argument and eloquence, if any one were now concerned to enforce the evidence of that exploded and idolatrous superstition. The gravity, solidity, age, and probity of so great an Emperor, who, through the whole course of his life conversed in a familiar manner with his friends and courtiers, and never affected those extraordinary airs of divinity assumed by Alexander and Demetrius. The historian, a contemporary writer, noted for candour and veracity, and withal, the greatest and most penetrating genius perhaps of all antiquity, and so free from any tendency to credulity, that he even lies under the contrary imputation of atheism and profaneness. The persons, from whose authority he related the miracle, of established character for judgment and veracity, as we may well presume, eyewitnesses of the fact, and confirming their testimony, after the Illyrian family was despoiled of the

empire, and could no longer give any reward as the price of a lie. *Utrumque, qui interfucere, nunc quoque memorant, postquam nullum mendacio pretium.* To which, if we add the public nature of the facts, as related, it will appear that no evidence can well be supposed stronger for so gross and so palpable a falsehood.

There is also a memorable story related by Cardinal De Retz, which may well deserve our consideration. When that intriguing politician fled into Spain to avoid the persecution of his enemies, he passed through Saragossa, the capital of Arragon, where he was shown, in the cathedral, a man who had served seven years as a door-keeper, and was well known to everybody in town that had ever paid his devotions at that church. He had been seen for so long a time wanting a leg, but recovered that limb by the rubbing of holy oil upon the stump; and the Cardinal assures us that he saw him with two legs. This miracle was vouched by all the canons of the church; and the whole company in town were appealed to for a confirmation of the fact; whom the Cardinal found, by their zealous devotion, to be thorough believers of the miracle. Here the relater was also contemporary to the supposed prodigy, of an incredulous and libertine character, as well as of great genius; the miracle of so *singular* a nature as could scarcely admit of a counterfeit, and the witnesses very numerous, and all of them, in a manner, spectators of the fact to which they gave their testimony. And what adds mightily to the force of the evidence, and may double our surprise on this occasion, is, that the Cardinal himself, who relates the story, seems not to give any credit to it, and consequently cannot be suspected of any concurrence in the holy fraud. He considered justly, that it was not requisite, in order to reject a fact of this nature, to be able accurately to disprove the testimony, and to trace

its falsehood through all the circumstances of knavery and credulity which produced it. He knew that, as this was commonly altogether impossible at any small distance of time and place, so was it extremely difficult, even where one was immediately present, by reason of the bigotry, ignorance, cunning, and roguery of a great part of mankind. He therefore concluded, like a just reasoner, that such an evidence carried falsehood upon the very face of it, and that a miracle, supported by any human testimony, was more properly a subject of derision than of argument.

There surely never was a greater number of miracles ascribed to one person than those which were lately said to have been wrought in France upon the tomb of Abbé Paris, the simoniac Jansenist, with whose sanctity the people were so long deluded. The curing of the sick, giving hearing to the deaf, and sight to the blind, were everywhere talked of as the usual effects of that holy sepulchre. But what is more extraordinary, many of the miracles were immediately proved upon the spot, before judges of unquestioned integrity, attested by witnesses of credit and distinction, in a learned age, and on the most eminent theatre that is now in the world. Nor is this all: a relation of them was published and dispersed everywhere; nor were the *Jesuits*, though a learned body, supported by the civil magistrate, and determined enemies to those opinions in whose favour the miracles were said to have been wrought, ever able distinctly to refute them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This book was writ by Mons. Montgeron, counsellor or judge of the parliament of Paris: a man of figure and character, who was also a martyr to the cause and is now said to be somewhere in a dungeon on account of his book.

There is another book in three volumes (called *Pecueil des Miracles de l'Abbé Paris*) giving an account of many of these miracles, and accompanied with prefatory discourses, which are very well written. There runs, however, through the whole of these a ridiculous comparison between the miracles of our Saviour and those of the Abbé, wherein it is asserted,

Where shall we find such a number of circumstances agreeing to the corroboration of one fact? And

that the evidence for the latter is equal to that for the former: as if the testimony of men could ever be put in the balance with that of God himself, who conducted the pen of the inspired writers. If these writers indeed, were to be considered merely as human testimony, the French author is very moderate in his comparison; since he might, with some appearance of reason, pretend that the Jansenist miracles must surpass the other in evidence and authority. The following circumstances are drawn from authentic papers, inserted in the above-mentioned book.

Many of the miracles of Abbé Paris were proved immediately by witnesses before the officiality, or bishop's court, at Paris, under the eye of Cardinal Noailles, whose character for integrity and capacity was never contested even by his enemies.

His successor in the archbishopric was an enemy to the Jansenists, and for that reason promoted to the See by the Court. Yet twenty-two rectors or curés of Paris, with infinite earnestness, press him to examine those miracles, which they assert to be known to the whole world, and indisputably certain: but he wisely forbore.

The Molinist party had tried to discredit these miracles in one instance, that of Mademoiselle la Franc. But, besides that their proceedings were in many respects the most irregular in the world, particularly in citing only a few of the Jansenist witnesses, whom they tampered with: besides this, I say, they soon found themselves overwhelmed by a cloud of new witnesses, one hundred and twenty in number, most of them persons of credit and substance in Paris, who gave oath for the miracle. This was accompanied with a solemn and earnest appeal to the parliament. But the parliament were forbidden, by authority, to meddle in the affair. It was at last observed, that where men are heated by zeal and enthusiasm, there is no degree of human testimony so strong as may not be procured for the greatest absurdity: and those who will be so silly as to examine the affair by that medium, and seek particular flaws in the testimony, are almost sure to be confounded. It must be a miserable imposture, indeed, that does not prevail in that contest.

All who have been in France about that time have heard of the reputation of Mons. Herault, the *Lieutenant de Police*, whose vigilance, penetration, activity, and extensive intelligence, have been much talked of. This magistrate, who





of the events which they relate? And this, surely, in the eyes of all reasonable people, will alone be regarded as a sufficient refutation.

Is the consequence just, because some human testimony has the utmost force and authority in some cases, when it relates the battles of Philippi or Pharsalia for instance, that therefore all kinds of testimony must, in all cases, have equal force and authority? Suppose that the CÆSAREAN or POMPEIAN factions had, each of them, claimed the victory in these battles, and that the historians of each party had uniformly ascribed the advantage to their own side, how could mankind, at this distance, have been able to determine between them? The contrariety is equally strong between the miracles

sanctity of life, as well as extraordinary capacity, is well known. The famous Racine gives an account of this miracle in his famous history of Port Royal, and fortifies it with all the proofs, which a multitude of nuns, priests, physicians, and men of the world, all of them of undoubted credit, could bestow upon it. Several men of letters, particularly the bishop of Tournay, thought this miracle so certain, as to employ it in the refutation of atheists and freethinkers. The queen-regent of France, who was extremely prejudiced against the Port Royal, sent her own physician to examine the miracle, who returned an absolute convert. In short, the supernatural cure was so incontestable, that it saved, for a time, that famous monastery from the ruin with which it was threatened by the Jesuits. Had it been a cheat, it had certainly been detected by such sagacious and powerful antagonists, and must have hastened the ruin of the contrivers. Our divines, who can build up a formidable castle upon such despicable materials; what a prodigious fabric could they have reared from these and many other circumstances which I have not mentioned! How often would the great names of Pascal, Racine, Arnaud, Nicole, have resounded in our ears? But if they be wise, they had better adopt the miracle, as being more worth a thousand times than all the rest of their collection. Besides, it may serve very much to their purpose. For that miracle was really performed by the touch of an authentic holy prick of the holy thorn, which composed the holy crown, which, etc.

related by Herodotus or Plutarch, and those delivered by Mariana, Bede, or any monkish historian.

The wise lend a very ready faith to every report which favours the passion of the reporter, whether it magnifies his country, his family, or himself, or in any other way strikes in with his natural inclinations and propensities. But what greater temptation than to appear a missionary, a prophet, an ambassador from heaven? Who would not encounter many dangers and difficulties in order to obtain so sublime a character? Or if, by the help of vanity and a heated imagination, a man has first made a concert of himself, and entered seriously into the delusion, who ever scruples to make use of pious frauds in support of so holy and meritorious a cause?

The smallest spark may here kindle into the greatest flame, because the materials are always prepared for it. The *aridum genus auricularum*,<sup>1</sup> the gazing populace, receive greedily, without examination, whatever soothes superstition and promotes wonder.

How many stories of this nature have, in all ages, been detected and exploded in their infancy? How many more have been celebrated for a time, and have afterwards sunk into neglect and oblivion? Where such reports, therefore, fly about, the solution of the phenomenon is obvious, and we judge in conformity to regular experience and observation, when we account for it by the known and natural principles of credulity and delusion. And shall we, rather than have recourse to so natural a solution, allow of a miraculous violation of the most established laws of nature?

I need not mention the difficulty of detecting a falsehood in any private or even public history, at the place where it is said to happen, much more when the scene is removed to ever so small a

distance. Even a court of judicature, with all the authority, accuracy, and judgment, which they can employ, find themselves often at a loss to distinguish between truth and falsehood in the most recent actions. But the matter never comes to any issue, if trusted to the common method of altercation and debate, and flying rumours, especially when men's passions have taken part on either side.

In the infancy of new religions, the wise and learned commonly esteem the matter too inconsiderable to deserve their attention or regard. And when afterwards they would willingly detect the cheat, in order to undeceive the deluded multitude, the season is now past, and the records and witnesses, which might clear up the matter, have perished beyond recovery.

No means of detection remain but those which must be drawn from the very testimony itself of the reporters : and these, though always sufficient with the judicious and knowing, are commonly too fine to fall under the comprehension of the vulgar.

Upon the whole, then, it appears, that no testimony for any kind of miracle has ever amounted to a probability, much less to a proof; and that, even supposing it amounted to a proof, it would be opposed by another proof, derived from the very nature of the fact which it would endeavour to establish. It is experience only which gives authority to human testimony ; and it is the same experience which assures us of the laws of nature. When, therefore, these two kinds of experience are contrary, we have nothing to do but to subtract the one from the other, and embrace an opinion either on one side or the other, with that assurance which arises from the remainder. But according to the principle here explained, this subtraction with regard to all popular religions amounts to an entire annihilation ; and therefore we may establish it as a maxim, that no human testimony can have such

force as to prove a miracle, and make it a just foundation for any such system of religion.

I beg the limitations here made may be remarked, when I say, that a miracle can never be proved so as to be the foundation of a system of religion. For I own, that otherwise there may possibly be miracles, or violations of the usual course of nature, of such a kind as to admit of proof from human testimony; though perhaps it will be impossible to find any such in all the records of history. Thus, suppose all authors, in all languages, agree, that, from the 1st of January, 1600, there was a total darkness over the whole earth for eight days: suppose that the tradition of this extraordinary event is still strong and lively among the people: that all travellers who return from foreign countries bring us accounts of the same tradition, without the least variation or contradiction: it is evident that our present philosophers, instead of doubting the fact, ought to receive it as certain, and ought to search for the causes whence it might be derived. The decay, corruption, and dissolution of nature, is an event rendered probable by so many analogies, that any phenomenon, which seems to have a tendency towards that catastrophe, comes within the reach of human testimony, if that testimony be very extensive and uniform.

But suppose that all the historians who treat of England should agree, that on the first of January, 1600, Queen Elizabeth died; that both before and *after her death, she was seen by her physicians and the whole court, as is usual with persons of her rank*; that her successor was acknowledged and proclaimed by the Parliament; and that, after being interred for a month, she again appeared, resumed the throne, and governed England for three years; I must confess that I should be surprised at the concurrence of so many odd circumstances, but should not have the least inclination to believe so

miraculous an event. I should not doubt of her pretended death, and of those other public circumstances that followed it: I should only assert it to have been pretended, and that it neither was, nor possibly could be, real. You would in vain object to me the difficulty, and almost impossibility of deceiving the world in an affair of such consequence; the wisdom and solid judgment of that renowned Queen; with the little or no advantage which she could reap from so poor an artifice: all this might astonish me; but I would still reply, that the knavery and folly of men are such common phenomena, that I should rather believe the most extraordinary events to arise from their concurrence, than admit of so signal a violation of the laws of nature.

But should this miracle be ascribed to any new system of religion; men, in all ages, have been so much imposed on by ridiculous stories of that kind, that this very circumstance would be a full proof of a cheat, and sufficient, with all men of sense, not only to make them reject the fact, but even reject it without further examination. Though the being to whom the miracle is ascribed, be in this case Almighty, it does not, upon that account, become a whit more probable; since it is impossible for us to know the attributes or actions of such a Being, otherwise than from the experience which we have of his productions in the usual course of nature. This still reduces us to past observation, and obliges us to compare the instances of the violation of truth in the testimony of men, with those of the violation of the laws of nature by miracles, in order to judge which of them is most likely and probable. As the violations of truth are more common in the testimony concerning religious miracles than in that concerning any other matter of fact; this must diminish very much the authority of the former testimony, and make us form a general

resolution never to lend any attention to it, with whatever specious pretence it may be covered.

Lord Bacon seems to have embraced the same principles of reasoning. "We ought," says he, "to make a collection or particular history of all monsters and prodigious births or productions; and, in a word, of every thing new, rare, and extraordinary in nature. But this must be done with the most severe scrutiny, lest we depart from truth. Above all, every relation must be considered as suspicious which depends in any degree upon religion, as the prodigies of Livy: and no less so every thing that is to be found in the writers on natural magic or alchemy, or such authors who seem all of them to have an unconquerable appetite for falsehood and fable."<sup>1</sup>

I am the better pleased with the method of reasoning here delivered, as I think it may serve to confound those dangerous friends, or disguised enemies to the *Christian religion*, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on *Faith*, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure. To make this more evident, let us examine those miracles related in Scripture; and, not to lose ourselves in too wide a field, let us confine ourselves to such as we find in the *Pentateuch*, which we shall examine, according to the principles of these pretended Christians, not as the word or testimony of God himself, but as the production of a mere human writer and historian. Here, then, we are first to consider a book, presented to us by a barbarous and ignorant people, written in an age when they were still more barbarous, and, in all probability, long after the facts which it relates, corroborated by no concurring testimony, and resembling those fabulous accounts

<sup>1</sup> Nov. Org. lib. ii. aph. 29.



## ADDITIONAL ESSAYS





## ESSAY I

### OF IMPUDENCE AND MODESTY

I HAVE always been of opinion, that the common complaints against Providence are ill grounded, and that the good or bad qualities of men are the causes of their good or bad fortune, more than what is generally imagined. There are, no doubt, instances to the contrary, and these too pretty numerous; but few in comparison of the instances we have of a right distribution of prosperity and adversity. nor, in deed, could it be otherwise from the common course of human affairs. To be endowed with a benevolent disposition, and to love others, will almost infallibly procure love and esteem, which is the chief circumstance in life, and facilitates every enterprise and undertaking, besides the satisfaction which immediately results from it. The case is much the same with the other virtues. Prosperity is naturally, though not necessarily, attached to virtue and merit; and adversity, in like manner, to vice and folly.

I must, however, confess, that this rule admits of an exception with regard to one moral quality, and that *modesty* has a natural tendency to conceal a man's talents, as *impudence* displays them to the utmost, and has been the only cause why many have risen in the world, under all the disadvantages of low birth and little merit. Such indolence and incapacity is there in the generality of mankind, that they are apt to receive a man for whatever he

has a mind to put himself off for ; and admit his overbearing airs as proofs of that merit which he assumes to himself. A decent assurance seems to be the natural attendant on virtue, and few men can distinguish impudence from it : as, on the other hand, diffidence, being the natural result of vice and folly, has drawn disgrace upon modesty, which in outward appearance so nearly resembles it.

I was lately lamenting to a friend of mine, (who loves a conceit,) that popular applause should be bestowed with so little judgment, and that so many empty forward coxcombs should rise up to a figure in the world : upon which he said there was nothing surprising in the case. (*Popular fame*, says he, is nothing but breath or air ; and air very naturally presses into a vacuum.)

As impudence, though really a vice, has the same effects upon a man's fortune as if it were a virtue, so we may observe, that it is almost as difficult to be attained, and is, in that respect, distinguished from all the other vices, which are acquired with little pains, and continually increase upon indulgence. Many a man, being sensible that modesty is extremely prejudicial to him in making his fortune, has resolved to be impudent, and to put a bold face upon the matter ; but it is observable, that such people have seldom succeeded in the attempt, but have been obliged to relapse into their primitive modesty. (Nothing carries a man through the world like a true genuine natural impudence. Its counterfeit is good for nothing, nor can ever support itself. In any other attempt, whatever faults a man commits and is sensible of, he is so much nearer his end. But when he endeavours at impudence, if he ever failed in the attempt, the remembrance of that failure will make him blush, and will infallibly disconcert him ; after which every blush is a cause for new blushes, till he be found out to be an arrant cheat, and a vain pretender to impudence.)

If any thing can give a modest man more assurance, it must be some advantages of fortune, which chance procures to him. Riches naturally gain a man a favourable reception in the world, and give merit a double lustre, when a person is endowed with it, and they supply its place, in a great measure, when it is absent. It is wonderful to observe what airs of superiority fools and knaves, with large possessions, give themselves above men of the greatest merit in poverty. Nor do the men of merit make any strong opposition to these usurpations, or rather they seem to favour them by the modesty of their behaviour. Their good sense and experience make them diffident of their judgment, and cause them to examine every thing with the greatest accuracy. As, on the other hand, the delicacy of their sentiments makes them timorous lest they commit faults, and loathe in the practice of the world that integrity of virtue, so to speak, of which they are so jealous. To make wisdom agree with confidence, is as difficult as to reconcile vice and modesty.

These are the reflections, which have occurred upon this subject of impudence and modesty, and I hope the reader will not be displeased to see them wrought into the following allegory.

Jupiter, in the beginning, joined *Virtue*, *Wisdom*, and *Confidence* together, and *Vice*, *Folly*, and *Diffidence*, and thus connected, sent them into the world. But though he thought that he had matched them with great judgment, and said that *Confidence* was the natural companion of *Virtue*, and that *Vice* deserved to be attended with *Diffidence*, they had not gone far before dissension arose among them. *Wisdom*, who was the guide of the one company, was always accustomed, before she ventured upon any road, however beaten, to examine it carefully, to inquire whither it led, what dangers, difficulties, and hinderances might possibly or probably occur in it. In these deliberations she usually consumed

some time ; which delay was very displeasing to *Confidence*, who was always inclined to hurry on, without much forethought or deliberation, in the first road he met. *Wisdom* and *Virtue* were inseparable : but *Confidence* one day, following his impetuous nature, advanced a considerable way before his guides and companions ; and not feeling any want of their company, he never inquired after them, nor ever met with them more. In like manner, the other society, though joined by *Jupiter*, disagreed and separated. As *Folly* saw very little way before her, she had nothing to determine concerning the goodness of roads, nor could give the preference to one above another ; and this want of resolution was increased by *Diffidence*, who, with her doubts and scruples, always retarded the journey. This was a great annoyance to *Vice*, who loved not to hear of difficulties and delays, and was never satisfied without his full career, in whatever his inclinations led him to. *Folly*, he knew, though she hearkened to *Diffidence*, would be easily managed when alone ; and, therefore, as a vicious horse throws his rider, he openly beat away his controller of all his pleasures, and proceeded on his journey with *Folly*, from whom he is inseparable. *Confidence* and *Diffidence* being, after this manner, both thrown loose from their respective companies, wandered for some time ; till at last chance led them at the same time to one village. *Confidence* went directly up to the great house, which belonged to *Wealth*, the lord of the village ; and, without staying for a porter, intruded himself immediately into the innermost apartments, where he found *Vice* and *Folly* well received before him. He joined the train ; recommended himself very quickly to his landlord ; and entered into such familiarity with *Vice*, that he was enlisted in the same company with *Folly*. They were frequent guests to *Wealth*, and from that moment inseparable. *Diffidence*, in the mean time,

not daring to approach the great house, accepted of an invitation from *Poverty*, one of the tenants; and entering the cottage, found *Wisdom* and *Virtue*, who, being repulsed by the landlord, had retired thither. *Virtue* took compassion of her, and *Wisdom* found, from her temper, that she would easily improve; so they admitted her into their society. Accordingly, by their means, she altered in a little time somewhat of her manner, and becoming much more amiable and engaging, was now known by the name of *Modesty*. As ill company has a greater effect than good, *Confidence*, though more refractory to counsel and example, degenerated so far by the society of *Vice* and *Folly*, as to pass by the name of *Impudence*. Mankind, who saw these societies as Jupiter first joined them, and knew nothing of these mutual desertions, are thereby led into strange mistakes; and, wherever they see *Impudence*, make account of finding *Virtue* and *Wisdom*; and wherever they observe *Modesty*, call her attendants *Vice* and *Folly*.

## ESSAY II

### OF LOVE AND MARRIAGE

I know not whence it proceeds, that women are so apt to take amiss every thing which is said in disparagement of the married state; and always consider a satire upon matrimony as a satire upon themselves. Do they mean that they are the parties principally concerned, and that, if a backwardness to enter into that state should prevail in the world, they would be the greatest sufferers? or, are they sensible, that misfortunes and miscarriages of the married state are owing more to their sex than to ours? I hope they do not intend to confess either of these two particulars, or to give such an advantage to their adversaries the men, as even to allow them to suspect it.

I have often had thoughts of complying with this humour of the fair sex, and of writing a panegyric upon marriage; but in looking around for materials they seemed to be of so mixed a nature, that at the conclusion of my reflections, I found that I was as much disposed to write a satire, which might be placed on the opposite pages of the panegyric; and I am afraid, that as satire is, on most occasions, more read than panegyric, I should have done their cause more harm than good by this expedient. To misrepresent facts is what, I know, they will not require of me. I must be more a friend to truth, than even to them, where their interests are opposite.

I shall tell the women what it is our sex complains of most in the married state; and if they be disposed to satisfy us in this particular, all the other differences will easily be accommodated. If I be not mistaken, it is their love of dominion which is the ground of the quarrel: though it is very likely, that they will think it an unreasonable love of it in us, which makes us insist so much upon that point. However this may be, no passion seems to have more influence on female minds than this for power; and there is a remarkable instance in history of its prevailing above another passion, which is the only one that can be supposed a proper counterpoise for it. We are told, that all the women in Scythia once conspired against the men, and kept the secret so well that they executed their design before they were suspected. They surprised the men in drink, or asleep; bound them all fast in chains, and having called a solemn council of the whole sex, it was debated what expedient should be used to improve the present advantage, and prevent their falling again into slavery. To kill all the men did not seem to be the relish of any part of the assembly, notwithstanding the injuries formerly received; and they were afterwards pleased to make a great merit of this lenity of theirs. It was, therefore, agreed to put out the eyes of the whole male sex, and thereby resign in all future time the vanity which they could draw from their beauty, in order to secure their authority. We must no longer pretend to dress and show, said they; but then we shall be free from slavery. We shall hear no more tender sighs, but in return we shall hear no more imperious commands. Love must for ever leave us; but he will carry subjection along with him.

It is regarded by some as an unlucky circumstance, since the women were resolved to maim the men, and deprive them of some of their senses, in



order to render them humble and dependent, that the sense of hearing could not serve their purpose, since it is probable the females would rather have attacked that than the sight; and, I think, it is agreed among the learned, that, in a married state, it is not near so great an inconvenience to lose the former sense as the latter. However this may be, we are told by modern anecdotes, that some of the Scythian women did secretly spare their husbands' eyes; presuming, I suppose, that they could govern them as well by means of that sense as without it. But so incorrigible and untractable were these men, that their wives were all obliged, in a few years, as their youth and beauty decayed, to imitate the example of their sisters: which it was no difficult matter to do in a state where the female sex had once got the superiority.

I know not if our Scottish ladies derive any thing of this humour from their Scythian ancestors; but I must confess, that I have often been surprised to see a woman very well pleased to take a fool for her mate, that she might govern with the less control; and could not but think her sentiments, in this respect, still more barbarous than those of the Scythian women above mentioned; as much as the eyes of the understanding are more valuable than those of the body.

But to be just, and to lay the blame more equally, I am afraid it is the fault of our sex, if the women be so fond of rule; and that if we did not abuse our authority, they would never think it worth while to dispute it. Tyrants, we know, produce rebels; and all history informs us, that rebels, when they prevail, are apt to become tyrants in their turn. For this reason I could wish there were no pretensions to authority on either side, but that every thing was carried on with perfect equality, as between two equal members of the same body. And to induce both parties to embrace those



which accounts for the mutual love betwixt the sexes in so agreeable a manner, I would do it by the following allegory.

When Jupiter had separated the male from the female, and had quelled their pride and ambition by so severe an operation, he could not but repent him of the cruelty of his vengeance, and take compassion on poor mortals, who were now become incapable of any repose or tranquillity. Such cravings, such anxieties, such necessities arose, as made them curse their creation, and think existence itself a punishment. In vain had they recourse to every other occupation and amusement. In vain did they seek after every pleasure of sense, and every refinement of reason. Nothing could fill that void which they felt in their hearts, or supply the loss of their partner, who was so fatally separated from them. To remedy this disorder, and to bestow some comfort, at least, on the human race in their forlorn situation, Jupiter sent down Love and Hymen, to collect the broken halves of human kind, and piece them together in the best manner possible. These two deities found such a prompt disposition in mankind to unite again in their primeval state, that they proceeded on their work with wonderful success for some time, till, at last, from many unlucky accidents, dissension arose betwixt them. The chief counsellor and favourite of Hymen was Care, who was continually filling his patron's head with prospects of futurity, a settlement, family, children, servants; so that little else was regarded in all the matches they made. On the other hand, Love had chosen Pleasure for his favourite, who was as pernicious a counsellor as the other, and would never allow Love to look beyond the present momentary gratification, or the satisfying of the prevailing inclination. These two favourites became, in a little time, irreconcilable enemies, and made it their chief business to undermine each other in all their undertakings. No sooner had Love fixed

upon two halves, which he was cementing together, and forming to a close union, but Care insinuates himself, and bringing Hymen along with him, dissolves the union produced by Love, and joins each half to some other half, which he had provided for it. To be revenged of this, Pleasure creeps in upon a pair already joined by Hymen; and calling Love to his assistance, they underhand contrive to join each half, by secret links, to halves which Hymen was wholly unrequited with. It was not long before this quarrel was felt in its pernicious consequences; and such complaints arose before the throne of Jupiter, that he was obliged to summon the offending parties to appear before him, in order to give an account of their proceedings. After hearing the pleadings on both sides, he ordered an immediate reconciliation betwixt Love and Hymen, as the only expedient for giving happiness to mankind, and that he might be sure this reconciliation should be durable, he had his strict injunctions on them never to join any halves without consulting their favourites Care and Pleasure, and obtaining the consent of both to the conjunction. Where this order is strictly observed, the Androgyne is perfectly restored, and the human race enjoy the same happiness as in their primeval state. The seam is scarce perceived that joins the two beings, but both of them combine to form one perfect and happy creature.

## ESSAY III

### OF THE STUDY OF HISTORY

THERE is nothing which I would recommend more earnestly to my female readers than the study of history, as an occupation, of all others, the best suited both to their sex and education, much more instructive than their ordinary books of amusement, and more entertaining than those serious compositions, which are usually to be found in their closets. Among other important truths, which they may learn from history, they may be informed of two particulars, the knowledge of which may contribute very much to their quiet and repose. That our sex, as well as theirs, are far from being such perfect creatures as they are apt to imagine, and that Love is not the only passion which governs the male world, but is often overcome by avarice, ambition, vanity, and a thousand other passions. Whether they be the false representations of mankind in those two particulars, which endear novels and romances so much to the fair sex, I know not ; but must confess, that I am sorry to see them have such an aversion to matter of fact, and such an appetite for falsehood. I remember I was once desired by a young beauty, for whom I had some passion, to send her some novels and romances for her amusement to the country ; but was not so ungenerous as to take the advantage, which such a course of reading might have given me, being resolved not to make use of poisoned arms against her. I therefore sent

her Plutarch's Lives, assuring her, at the same time, that there was not a word of truth in them from beginning to end. She perused them very attentively, till she came to the lives of Alexander and Cæsar, whose names she had heard of by accident, and then returned me the book, with many reproaches for deceiving her.

I may, indeed, be told, that the fair sex have no such aversion to history as I have represented, provided it be *secret* history, and contain some memorable transaction proper to excite their curiosity. But as I do not find that truth, which is the basis of history, is at all regarded in these anecdotes, I cannot admit of this as a proof of their passion for that study. However this may be, I see not why the same curiosity might not receive a more proper direction, and lead them to desire accounts of those who lived in past ages, as well as of their contemporaries. What is it in Cleora, whether Fultia entertains a secret commerce of love with Philander, or not? Has she not equal reason to be pleased, when she is informed (what is whispered about among historians) that Cato's sister had an intrigue with Cæsar, and palmed her son, Marcus Brutus, upon her husband for his own, though in reality he was her gallant's? And are not the loves of Messalina or Julia as proper subjects of discourse as any intrigue that this city has produced of late years?

But I know not whence it comes that I have been thus seduced into a kind of rallery against the ladies; unless, perhaps, it proceed from the same cause, which makes the person, who is the favourite of the company, be often the object of their good-natured jests and pleasantries. We are pleased to address ourselves after any manner to one who is agreeable to us, and at the same time presume, that nothing will be taken amiss by a person, who is secure of the good opinion and affections of every one present. I shall now proceed to handle my

subject more seriously, and shall point out the many advantages, which flow from the study of history, and show how well suited it is to every one, but particularly to those who are debarred the severer studies, by the tenderness of their complexion, and the weakness of their education. The advantages found in history seem to be of three kinds, as it amuses the fancy, as it improves the understanding, and as it strengthens virtue.

In reality, what more agreeable entertainment to the mind, than to be transported into the remotest ages of the world, and to observe human society, in its infancy, making the first faint essays towards the arts and sciences; to see the policy of government, and the civility of conversation refining by degrees, and every thing which is ornamental to human life advancing towards its perfection? To remark the rise, progress, declension, and final extinction of the most flourishing empires; the virtues which contributed to their greatness, and the vices which drew on their ruin? In short, to see all the human race, from the beginning of time, pass, as it were, in review before us, appearing in their true colours, without any of those disguises which, during their lifetime, so much perplexed the judgment of the beholders. What spectacle can be imagined so magnificent, so various, so interesting? What amusement, either of the senses or imagination, can be compared with it? Shall those trifling pastimes, which engross so much of our time, be preferred as more satisfactory, and more fit to engage our attention? How perverse must that taste be which is capable of so wrong a choice of pleasures?

But history is a most improving part of knowledge, as well as an agreeable amusement; and a great part of what we commonly call erudition, and value so highly, is nothing but an acquaintance with historical facts. An extensive knowledge of this kind belongs to men of letters; but I must think it an unpardonable

ignorance in persons, of whatever sex or condition, not to be acquainted with the history of their own country, together with the histories of ancient Greece and Rome. A woman may behave herself with good manners, and have even some vivacity in her turn of wit, but where her mind is so unfurnished, it is impossible her conversation can afford any entertainment to men of sense and reflection.

I must add, that history is not only a valuable part of knowledge, but opens the door to many other parts, and affords materials to most of the sciences. And, indeed, if we consider the shortness of human life, and our limited knowledge, even of what passes in our own time, we must be sensible that we should be for ever children in understanding, were it not for this invention, which extends our experience to all past ages, and to the most distant nations, making them contribute as much to our improvement in wisdom, as if they had actually lain under our observation. A man acquainted with history may, in some respect, be said to have lived from the beginning of the world, and to have been making continual additions to his stock of knowledge in every century.

There is also an advantage in that experience, which is acquired by history, above what is learned by the practice of the world, that it brings us acquainted with human affairs without diminishing in the least from the most delicate sentiments of virtue. And to tell the truth, I know not any study or occupation so unexceptionable as history in this particular. Poets can paint virtue in the most charming colours, but as they adhere to themselves entirely to the passions, they often become advocates for vice. Even philosophers are apt to bewilder themselves in the subtilty of their speculations, and we have seen some go so far as to deny the reality of all moral distinctions. But I think it a remark worthy the attention of the speculative,



that the historians have been, almost without exception, the true friends of virtue, and have always represented it in its proper colours, however they may have erred in their judgments of particular persons. Machiavel himself discovers a true sentiment of virtue in his history of Florence. When he talks as a politician, in his general reasonings, he considers poisoning, assassination, and perjury, as lawful arts of power; but when he speaks as an historian, in his particular narrations, he shows so keen an indignation against vice, and so warm an approbation of virtue in many passages, that I could not forbear applying to him that remark of Horace, that if you chase away Nature, though with ever so great indignity, she will always return upon you. Nor is this combination of historians in favour of virtue, at all difficult to be accounted for. When a man of business enters into life and action, he is more apt to consider the characters of men, as they have relation to his interest, than as they stand in themselves; and has his judgment warped on every occasion by the violence of his passion. When a philosopher contemplates characters and manners in his closet, the general abstract view of the objects leaves the mind so cold and unmoved, that the sentiments of nature have no room to play, and he scarce feels the difference between vice and virtue. History keeps in a just medium between these extremes, and places the objects in their true point of view. The writers of history, as well as the readers, are sufficiently interested in the characters and events, to have a lively sentiment of blame or praise: and, at the same time, have no particular interest or concern to pervert their judgment.

*Veræ voces tum demum pectore ab imo  
Eliciuntur.*

LUCRET.

## ESSAY IV

### OF AVARICE.

It is easy to observe, that some writers exaggerate every character, and draw their sop or coward with stronger features than are any where to be met with in nature. This moral kind of painting for the stage has been often compared to the painting for capitals and ceilings, where the colours are overcharged, and every part is drawn excessively large, and beyond nature. The figures seem monstrous and disproportioned, when seen too nigh, but become natural and regular, when set at a distance, and placed in that point of view, in which they are intended to be surveyed. For a like reason, when characters are exhibited in theatrical representations, the want of reality removes, in a manner, the personages, and rendering them more cold and uninteresting, makes it necessary to compensate, by the force of colouring, what they want in substance. Thus we find in common life, that when a man once allows himself to depart from truth in his narrations, he never can keep within bounds of probability, but adds still some new circumstance to render his stories more marvellous, and to satisfy his imagination. Two men in buckram suits became eleven to Sir John Falstaff, before the end of the story.

There is only one vice, which may be found in life with as strong features, and as high a colouring as need be employed by any satirist or comic poet,

and that is Avarice. Every day we meet with men of immense fortunes, without heirs, and on the very brink of the grave, who refuse themselves the most common necessities of life, and go on heaping possessions on possessions under all the real pressures of the severest poverty. An old usurer, says the story, lying in his last agonies, was presented by the priest with the crucifix to worship. He opens his eyes a moment before he expires, considers the crucifix, and cries, *These jewels are not true; I can only lend ten pistoles upon such a pledge.* (This was probably the invention of some epigrammatist; and yet every one, from his own experience, may be able to recollect almost as strong instances of perseverance in avarice. It is commonly reported of a famous miser in this city, that finding himself near death, he sent for some of the magistrates, and gave them a bill of an hundred pounds, payable after his decease, which sum he intended should be disposed of in charitable uses; but scarce were they gone, when he orders them to be called back, and offers them ready money if they would abate five pounds of the sum. Another noted miser in the north, intending to defraud his heirs, and leave his fortune to the building an hospital, protracted the drawing of his will from day to day; and it is thought, that if those interested in it had not paid for the drawing of it, he would have died intestate. In short, none of the most furious excesses of love and ambition are, in any respect, to be compared to the extremes of avarice.

The best excuse that can be made for avarice is, that it generally prevails in old men, or in men of cold tempers, where all the other affections are extinct; and the mind being incapable of remaining without some passion or pursuit, at last finds out this monstrously absurd one, which suits the coldness and inactivity of its temper. At the same time, it seems very extraordinary, that so frosty,

spiritless a passion should be able to carry us further than all the warmth of youth and pleasure. But if we look more narrowly into the matter, we shall find, that this very circumstance renders the explanation of the cure more easy. When the temper is warm and full of vigour, it naturally shoots out more ways than one, and produces inferior passions to counterbalance, in some degree, its predominant inclination. It is impossible for a person of that temper, however bent on any pursuit, to be deprived of all sense of shame, or all regard to sentiments of mankind. His friends must have some influence over him, and other considerations are apt to have their weight. All this serves to restrain him within some bounds. But it is no wonder that the avaricious man, being, from the coldness of his temper, without regard to reputation, to friendship, or to pleasure, should be carried so far by his prevailing inclination, and should display his passion in such surprising instances.

Accordingly, we find no vice so irreclaimable as avarice, and though there scarcely has been a moralist or philosopher, from the beginning of the world to this day, who has not levelled a stone at it, we hardly find a single instance of any person's being cured of it. For this reason, I am more apt to approve of those who attack it with wit and humour, than of those who treat it in a serious manner. There being so little hopes of doing good to the people infected with this vice, I would have the rest of mankind at least diverted by our manner of exposing it, as indeed there is no kind of diversion, of which they seem so willing to partake.

Among the fables of Monsieur de la Motte, there is one levelled against avarice, which seems to me more natural and easy than most of the fables of that ingenious author. A miser, says he, being dead, and fairly interred, came to the banks of the Styx, desiring to be ferried over along with the

other ghosts. Charon demands his fare, and is surprised to see the miser, rather than pay it, throw himself into the river, and swim over to the other side, notwithstanding all the clamour and opposition that could be made to him. All hell was in an uproar; and each of the judges was meditating some punishment suitable to a crime of such dangerous consequence to the infernal revenues. Shall he be chained to the rock with Prometheus? or tremble below the precipice in company with the Danaïdes? or assist Sisyphus in rolling his stone? No, says Minos, none of these. We must invent some severer punishment. Let him be sent back to the earth, to see the use his heirs are making of his riches.

I hope it will not be interpreted as a design of setting myself in opposition to this celebrated author, if I proceed to deliver a fable of my own, which is intended to expose the same vice of avarice. The hint of it was taken from these lines of Mr. Pope:—

Damn'd to the mines, an equal fate betides  
The slave that digs it, and the slave that hides.

Our old mother Earth once lodged an indictment against Avarice before the courts of heaven, for her wicked and malicious counsel and advice in tempting, inducing, persuading, and traitorously seducing the children of the plaintiff to commit the detestable crime of parricide upon her, and, mangling the body, ransack her very bowels for hidden treasure. The indictment was very long and verbose; but we must omit a great part of the repetitions and synonymous terms, not to tire our readers too much with our tale. Avarice, being called before Jupiter to answer to this charge, had not much to say in her own defence. The injury was clearly proved upon her. The fact, indeed, was notorious, and the injury had been frequently repeated. When,

therefore, the plaintiff demanded justice, Jupiter very readily gave sentence in her favour; and his decree was to this purpose—That, since dame Avarice, the defendant, had thus grievously injured dame Earth, the plaintiff, she was hereby ordered to take that treasure, of which she had feloniously robbed the said plaintiff by ransacking her bosom, and restore it back to her without diminution or retention. From this sentence it will follow, says Jupiter to the by-standers, that in all future ages, the retainers of Avarice shall bury and conceal their riches, and thereby restore to the earth what they take from her.

## ESSAY V

### OF ESSAY WRITING

THE elegant part of mankind, who are not immersed in mere animal life, but employ themselves in the operations of the mind, may be divided into the *learned* and *conversable*. The learned are such as have chosen for their portion the higher and more difficult operations of the mind, which require leisure and solitude, and cannot be brought to perfection, without long preparation and severe labour. The conversable would join to a sociable disposition, and a taste for pleasure, an inclination for the easier and more gentle exercises of the understanding, for obvious reflections on human affairs, and the duties of common life, and for observation of the blemishes or perfections of the particular objects that surround them. Such subjects of thought furnish not sufficient employment in solitude, but require the company and conversation of our fellow-creatures, to render them a proper exercise for the mind; and this brings mankind together in society, where every one displays his thoughts in observations in the best manner he is able, and mutually gives and receives information, as well as pleasure.

The separation of the learned from the conversable world seems to have been the great defect of the last age, and must have had a very bad influence both on books and company: for what possibility is there of finding topics of conversation fit for the entertainment of rational creatures, without having recourse

sometimes to history, poetry, politics, and the more obvious principles, at least, of philosophy? Must our whole discourse be a continued series of gossiping stories and idle remarks? Must the mind never rise higher, but be perpetually

Stagnant and worn out with endless chat,  
Of Will do this, and Nan do that?

This would be to render the time spent in company the most unenterprising, as well as the most unprofitable, part of our lives.

On the other hand, learning has been as great a loser by being shut up in colleges and cells, and secluded from the world and good company. By that means every part of what we call *belles lettres* became totally barbarous, being cultivated by men without any taste for life or manners, and without that liberty and facility of thought and expression which can only be acquired by conversation. Even philosophy went to wreck by this moping recluso method of study, and became as chimerical in her conclusions, as she was unintelligible in her style and manner of delivery; and, indeed, what could be expected from men who never consulted experience in any of their reasonings, or who never searched for that experience, where alone it is to be found, in common life and conversation?

It is with great pleasure I observe, that men of letters in this age have lost in a great measure that shyness and bashfulness of temper, which kept them at a distance from mankind, and, at the same time, that men of the world are proud of borrowing from books their most agreeable topics of conversation. It is to be hoped that this league between the learned and conversible worlds, which is so happily begun, will be still further improved to their mutual advantage; and to that end, I know nothing more advantageous than such Essays as those with which I endeavour to entertain the public. In this view,



I cannot but consider myself as a kind of resident or ambassador from the dominions of learning to those of conversation, and shall think it my constant duty to promote a good correspondence betwixt these two states, which have so great a dependence on each other. I shall give intelligence to the learned of whatever passes in company, and shall endeavour to import into company whatever commodities I find in my native country proper for their use and entertainment. The balance of trade we need not be jealous of, nor will there be any difficulty to preserve it on both sides. The materials of this commerce must chiefly be furnished by conversation and common life : the manufacturing of them alone belongs to learning.

As it would be an unpardonable negligence in an ambassador not to pay his respects to the sovereign of the state where he is commissioned to reside ; so it would be altogether inexcusable in me not to address myself with a particular respect to the fair sex, who are the sovereigns of the empire of conversation. I approach them with reverence ; and were not my countrymen the learned, a stubborn independent race of mortals, extremely jealous of their liberty, and unaccustomed to subjection, I should resign into their fair hands the sovereign authority over the republic of letters. As the case stands, my commission extends no further than to desire a league, offensive and defensive, against our common enemies, against the enemies of reason and beauty, people of dull heads and cold hearts. From this moment let us pursue them with the severest vengeance : let no quarter be given, but to those of sound understandings and delicate affections ; and these characters, it is to be presumed, we shall always find inseparable.

To be serious, and to quit the allusion before it be worn threadbare, I am of opinion that women, that is, women of sense and education (for to such

alone I believe myself) are much better judges of all polite writing than men of the same degree of understanding; and that it is a vain piece, if they be so far terrified with the reverence and ridicule that is levelled against learned ladies, as to utterly to abandon every kind of bookish study in our sex. Let the dread of that ridicule have no other effect than to make them conceal their knowledge before fools, who are not worthy of it, nor of them. Such will still persevere upon the vain title of the male sex to affect a superiority above them: but my fair readers may be assured, that all men of sense, who know the world, have a great deference for their judgment of such books as lie within the compass of their knowledge, and repose more confidence in the delicacy of their taste, though unguided by rules, than in all the dull labours of pedants and commentators. In a neighbouring nation, equally famous for good taste, and for gallantry, the ladies are, in a manner, the sovereigns of the *learned* world, as well as of the *contertable*; and no polite writer pretends to venture before the public, without the approbation of some celebrated judges of that sex. Their verdict is, indeed, sometimes complained of; and, in particular, I find, that the admirers of Corneille, to save that great poet's honour upon the accident that Racine began to take over him, always said, that it was not to be expected, that so old a man could dispute the prize, before such judges, with so young a man as his rival. But this observation has been found unjust, since posterity seems to have ratified the verdict of that tribunal: and Racine, though dead, is still the favourite of the fair sex, as well as of the best judges among the men.

There is only one subject of which I am apt to distrust the judgment of females, and that is concerning books of gallantry and devotion, which they commonly affect as high flown as possible; and

most of them seem more delighted with the warmth, than with the justness of the passion. I mention gallantry and devotion as the same subject, because, in reality, they become the same when treated in this manner; and we may observe, that they both depend upon the very same complexion. As the fair sex have a great share of the tender and amorous disposition, it perverts their judgment on this occasion, and makes them be easily affected, even by what has no propriety in the expression or nature in the sentiment. Mr. Addison's elegant discourses on religion have no relish with them, in comparison of books of mystic devotion: and Otway's tragedies are rejected for the rakes of Mr. Dryden.

Would the ladies correct their false taste in this particular, let them accustom themselves a little more to books of all kinds: let them give encouragement to men of sense and knowledge to frequent their company; and finally, let them concur heartily in that union I have projected betwixt the learned and conversable worlds. They may, perhaps, meet with more complaisance from their usual followers than from men of learning; but they cannot reasonably expect so sincere an affection: and, I hope, they will never be guilty of so wrong a choice, as to sacrifice the substance for the shadow.

## ESSAY VI

### OF MORAL PREJUDICES

There is a set of men lately sprung up amongst us, who endeavour to distinguish themselves by ridiculing every thing, that has hitherto appeared sacred and venerable in the eyes of mankind. Reason, sobriety, honour, friendship, marriage, are the perpetual subjects of their insipid railery; and even public spirit, and a regard to our country, are treated as chimerical and romantic. Were the schemes of these anti-reformers to take place, all the bonds of society must be broken, to make way for the indulgence of a licentious mirth and gaiety; the companion of our drunken frolics must be preferred to a friend or brother; dissolute prodigality must be supplied at the expense of every thing valuable, either in public or private; and men shall have so little regard to any thing beyond themselves, that, at last, a free constitution of government must become a scheme perfectly impracticable among mankind, and must degenerate into one universal system of fraud and corruption.

There is another humour which may be observed in some pretenders to wisdom, and which, if not so pernicious as the idle petulant humour above mentioned, must, however, have a very bad effect on those who indulge it. I mean that grave philosophic endeavour after perfection, which, under pretext of reforming prejudices and errors, strikes at all the most endearing sentiments of the heart, and all the most useful biases and instincts, which can govern

a human creature. The Stoics were remarkable for this folly among the ancients; and I wish some of more venerable characters in later times had not copied them too faithfully in this particular. The virtuous and tender sentiments, or prejudices, if you will, have suffered mightily by these reflections; while a certain sullen pride or contempt of mankind has prevailed in their stead, and has been esteemed the greatest wisdom; though, in reality, it be the most egregious folly of all others. Statilius being solicited by Brutus to make one of that noble band who struck the Godlike stroke for the liberty of Rome, refused to accompany them, saying, *that all men were fools or mad, and did not deserve that a wise man should trouble his head about them.*

My learned reader will here easily recollect the reason, which an ancient philosopher gave, why he would not be reconciled to his brother, who solicited his friendship. He was too much a philosopher to think that the connection of having sprung from the same parent ought to have any influence on a reasonable mind, and expressed his sentiment after such a manner as I think not proper to repeat. When your friend is in affliction, says Epictetus, you may counterfeit a sympathy with him, if it give him relief; but take care not to allow any compassion to sink into your heart, or disturb that tranquillity, which is the perfection of wisdom. Diogenes being asked by his friends in his sickness, what should be done with him after his death? Why, says he, *throw me out into the fields.* What, replied they, *to the birds or beasts?* No: *place a cudgel by me, to defend myself withal.* To what purpose? say they, *you will not have any sense, nor any power of making use of it.* Then if the beasts should devour me, cries he, *shall I be any more sensible of it?* I know none of the sayings of that philosopher, which shows more evidently both the liveliness and ferocity of his temper.

How different from these are the maxims by which Eugenius conducts himself! In his youth, he applied himself, with the most unwearied labour, to the study of philosophy, and nothing was ever able to draw him from it, except when an opportunity offered of serving his friends, or doing a pleasure to some man of merit. When he was about thirty years of age, he was determined to quit the free life of a bachelor (in which otherwise he would have been inclined to remain), by considering that he was the last branch of an ancient family, which must have been extinguished had he died without children. He made choice of the virtuous and beautiful Fura for his consort, who, after being the solace of his life for many years, and having made him the father of several children, paid at last the general debt to nature. Nothing could have supported him under so severe an affliction, but the consolation he received from his young family, who were now become dearer to him on account of their deceased mother. One daughter in particular is his darling, and the secret joy of his soul; because her features, her air, her voice, recall every moment the tender memory of his spouse, and fill his eyes with tears. He conceals this partiality as much as possible, and none but his intimate friends are acquainted with it. To them he reveals all his tenderness, nor is he so affectedly philosophical, as even to call it by the name of weakness. They know that he still keeps the birthday of Fura with tears, and a more fond and tender recollection of past pleasures, in like manner as it was celebrated in her lifetime, with joy and festivity. They know that he preserves her picture with the utmost care, and his own picture in miniature, which he always wears next to his bosom, that he has left orders in his last will, that, in whatever part of the world he shall happen to die, his body shall be transported, and laid in the same grave with hers, and that a

monument shall be erected over them, and their mutual love and happiness celebrated in an epitaph, which he himself has composed for that purpose.

A few years ago I received a letter from a friend, who was abroad on his travels, and shall here communicate it to the public. It contains such an instance of a philosophic spirit, as I think pretty extraordinary, and may serve as an example, not to depart too far from the received maxims of conduct and behaviour, by a refined search after happiness or perfection. The story I have been since assured of as matter of fact.

Paris, Aug. 2, 1737.

SIR,

I know you are more curious of accounts of men than of buildings, and are more desirous of being informed of private history than of public transactions; for which reason I thought the following story, which is the common topic of conversation in this city, would be no unacceptable entertainment to you.

A young lady of birth and fortune, being left entirely at her own disposal, persisted long in a resolution of leading a single life, notwithstanding several advantageous offers that had been made to her. She had been determined to embrace this resolution, by observing the many unhappy marriages among her acquaintances, and by hearing the complaints which her female friends made of the tyranny, inconstancy, jealousy, or indifference of their husbands. Being a woman of strong spirit and an uncommon way of thinking, she found no difficulty either in forming or maintaining this resolution, and could not suspect herself of such weakness as ever to be induced, by any temptation, to depart from it. She had, however, entertained a strong desire of having a son, whose education she was resolved to make the principal concern of her life, and by that means supply the place of those

other passions which she was resolved for ever to renounce. She pushed her philosophy to such an uncommon length, as to find no contradiction betwixt such a desire and her former resolution, and accordingly looked about with great deliberation to find among all her male acquaintance, one whose character and person were agreeable to her, without being able to satisfy herself on that head. At length, being in the playhouse one evening, she sees in the parterre, a young man of a most engaging countenance and modest deportment, and feels such a prepossession in his favour, that she had hopes this must be the person she had long sought for in vain. She immediately despatches a servant to him, desiring his company at her lodgings next morning. The young man was overjoyed at the message and could not conceal his satisfaction, upon receiving such an address from a lady of so great beauty, reputation, and quality. He was, therefore, much disappointed, when he found a woman, who would allow him no freedoms, and amidst all her obliging behaviour, confined and cramped him to the bounds of rational discourse and conversation. She seemed, however, willing to commence a friendship with him, and told him, that his company would always be acceptable to her, whenever he had a leisure hour to bestow. He needed not much entreaty to renew his visits, being so struck with her wit and beauty, that he must have been unhappy had he been debarred her company. Every conversation served only the more to inflame his passion, and gave him more occasion to admire her person and understanding, as well as to rejoice in his own good fortune. He was not, however, without anxiety, when he considered the disproportion of their birth and fortune, nor was his uneasiness allayed, even when he reflected on the extraordinary manner in which their acquaintance had commenced. Our philosophical heroine, in the mean time, discovered, that





## ESSAY VII

### OF THE MIDDLE STATION OF LIFE

THE moral of the following fable will easily discover itself, without my explaining it. One rivulet meeting another, with whom he had been long united in strictest amity, with noisy brightness and disdain thus bespoke him—"What, brother ' still in the same state! Still low and creeping! Are you not ashamed, when you behold me, who though lately in a like condition with you, am now become a great river, and shall shortly be able to rival the Danube or the Rhine, provided those friendly rains continue which have favoured my banks, but neglected yours?" "Very true" replies the humble rivulet. "You are now, indeed, swoln to a great size, but methinks you are become withal somewhat turbulent and muddy. I am contented with my low condition and my purity."

Instead of commenting upon this fable, I shall take occasion from it to compare the different stations of life, and to persuade such of my readers as are placed in the middle station to be satisfied with it as the most eligible of all others. These form the most numerous rank of men that can be supposed susceptible of philosophy, and therefore all discourses of morality ought principally to be addressed to them. The great are too much immersed in pleasure, and the poor too much occupied in providing for the necessities of life to hearken to the calm voice of reason. The middle station, as it

is most happy in many respects, so particularly in this, that a man placed in it can, with the greatest leisure, consider his own happiness, and reap a new enjoyment, from comparing his situation with that of persons above or below him.

Agur's prayer is sufficiently noted—"Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches: feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." The middle station is here justly recommended, as affording the fullest security for virtue; and I may also add, that it gives opportunity for the most ample exercise of it, and furnishes employment for every good quality which we can possibly be possessed of. Those who are placed among the lower ranks of men, have little opportunity of exerting any other virtue besides those of patience, resignation, industry, and integrity. Those who are advanced into the higher stations, have full employment for their generosity, humanity, affability, and charity. When a man lies betwixt these two extremes, he can exert the former virtues towards his superiors, and the latter towards his inferiors. Every moral quality which the human soul is susceptible of, may have its turn, and be called up to action; and a man may, after this manner, be much more certain of his progress in virtue, than where his good qualities lie dormant, and without employment.

But there is another virtue that seems principally to lie among equals, and is, for that reason, chiefly calculated for the middle station of life. This virtue is friendship. I believe most men of generous tempers are apt to envy the great, when they consider the large opportunities such persons have of doing good to their fellow-creatures, and of acquiring the friendship and esteem of men of merit. They

make no advances in vain, and are not obliged to associate with those whom they have little kindness for, like people of inferior stations, who are subject to have their proffers of friendship rejected, even where they would be most fond of placing their affections. But though the great have more facility in acquiring friendships, they cannot be so certain of the sincerity of them as men of a lower rank, since the favours they bestow may acquire them flattery, instead of good will and kindness. It has been very judiciously remarked, that we attach ourselves more by the services we perform than by those we receive, and that a man is in danger of losing his friends by obliging them too far. I should, therefore, choose to lie in the middle way, and to have my commerce with my friend varied both by obligations given and received. I have too much pride to be willing that all the obligations should lie on my side, and should be afraid that, if they all lay on his, he would also have too much pride to be entirely easy under them, or have a perfect complacency in my company.

We may also remark of the middle station of life, that it is more favourable to the acquiring of wisdom and ability, as well as of virtue, and that a man so situated has a better chance for attaining a knowledge both of men and things, than those of a more elevated station. He enters with more familiarity into human life, and every thing appears in its natural colours before him. He has more leisure to form observations, and has, besides, the motive of ambition to push him on in his attainments, being certain that he can never rise to any distinction or eminence in the world, without his own industry. And here I cannot forbear communicating a remark, which may appear somewhat extraordinary, viz. that it is wisely ordained by Providence, that the middle station should be the most favourable to the improving our natural

abilities, since there is really more capacity requisite to perform the duties of that station, than is requisite to act in the higher spheres of life. There are more natural parts, and a stronger genius requisite to make a good lawyer or physician, than to make a great monarch. For let us take any race or succession of kings, where birth alone gives a title to the crown ; the English kings, for instance, who have not been esteemed the most shining in history. From the Conquest to the succession of his present Majesty, we may reckon twenty-eight sovereigns, omitting those who died minors. Of these, eight are esteemed princes of great capacity, viz. the Conqueror, Harry II., Edward I., Edward III., Harry V. and VII., Elizabeth, and the late King William. Now, I believe every one will allow, that, in the common run of mankind, there are not eight, out of twenty-eight, who are fitted by nature to make a figure either on the bench or at the bar. Since Charles VII., ten monarchs have reigned in France, omitting Francis II. Five of those have been esteemed princes of capacity, viz. Louis XI., XII., and XIV., Francis I., and Harry IV. In short, the governing of mankind well requires a great deal of virtue, justice, and humanity, but not a surprising capacity. A certain Pope, whose name I have forgot, used to say, *Let us divert ourselves, my friends ; the world governs itself.* There are, indeed, some critical times, such as those in which Harry IV. lived, that call for the utmost vigour ; and a less courage and capacity, than what appeared in that great monarch, must have sunk under the weight. But such circumstances are rare ; and even then fortune does at least one half of the business.

Since the common professions, such as law or physic, require equal, if not superior capacity, to what are exerted in the higher spheres of life, it is evident, that the soul must be made of still a

fuor mould, to shine in philosophy or poetry, or in any of the higher parts of learning. Courage and resolution are chiefly requisite in a commander; justice and humanity in a statesman; lat genius and capacity in a scholar. Great generals and great politicians are found in all ages and countries of the world, and frequently start up at once, even amongst the greatest barbarians. Sweden was sunk in ignorance, when it produced Gustavus Ericson, and Cossius Adolphus; Muscovy, when the Czar appeared; and perhaps Carthage, when it gave birth to Hannibal. But England must pass through a long gradation of its Spencers, Jonsons, Wallers, Drydens, before it arise at an Addison or a Pope. A happy talent for the liberal arts and sciences is a kind of prodigy among men. Nature must afford the richest genius that comes from her lands; education and example must cultivate it from the earliest infancy; and industry must endeavour to carry it to any degree of perfection. No man needs be surprised to see Koughan among the Persians; but Homer, in so early an age among the Greeks, is certainly matter of the highest wonder.

A man cannot show a genius for war, who is not so fortunate as to be trusted with command; and it seldom happens in any state or kingdom, that several at once are placed in that situation. How many Marlboroughs were there in the confederate army, who never rose so much as to the command of a regiment? But I am persuaded there has been but one Milton in England within these hundred years, because every one may exert the talents of poetry who is possessed of them, and no one could exert them under greater disadvantages than that divine poet. If any man were allowed to write verses, but the person who was beforehand named to be laureate, could we expect a poet in ten thousand years?

Were we to distinguish the ranks of men by their genius and capacity, more than by their virtue and usefulness to the public, great philosophers would certainly challenge the first rank, and must be placed at the top of mankind. So rare is this character, that perhaps there has not as yet been above two in the world who can lay a just claim to it. At least, Galileo and Newton seem to me so far to excel all the rest, that I cannot admit any other into the same class with them.

Great poets may challenge the second place ; and this species of genius, though rare, is yet much more frequent than the former. Of the Greek poets that remain, Homer alone seems to merit this character : of the Romans, Virgil, Horace, and Lucretius : of the English, Milton and Pope : Corneille, Racine, Boileau, and Voltaire, of the French : and Tasso and Ariosto of the Italians.

Great orators and historians are perhaps more rare than great poets ; but as the opportunities for exerting the talents requisite for eloquence, or acquiring the knowledge requisite for writing history, depend in some measure upon fortune, we cannot pronounce these productions of genius to be more extraordinary than the former.

I should now return from this digression, and show that the middle station of life is more favourable to happiness, as well as to virtue and wisdom : but as the arguments that prove this seem pretty obvious, I shall here forbear insisting on them.

## ESSAY VIII ON SUICIDE.

ONE considerable advantage that arises from philosophy, consists in the sovereign antidote which it affords to superstition and false religion. All other remedies against that pestilent distemper are vain, or at least uncertain. Plain good sense, and the practice of the world, which alone serve most purposes of life, are here found ineffectual. History, as well as daily experience, furnish instances of men endowed with the strongest capacity for business and affairs, who have all their lives crouched under slavery to the grossest superstition. Even gravity and sweetness of temper, which infuse a balm into every other wound, afford no remedy to so virulent a poison, as we may particularly observe of the sexes, who, though commonly possessed of these rich presents of nature, feel many of their joys blasted by this importunate intruder. But when sound philosophy has once gained possession of the mind, superstition is effectually excluded, and one may fairly affirm, that her triumph over this enemy is more complete than over most of the vices and imperfections incident to human nature. Love or anger, ambition or avarice, have their root in the temper and affections, which the soundest reason is scarce ever able fully to correct, but superstition being founded on false opinion, must immediately vanish when true philosophy has inspired juster sentiments of superior powers. The contest is here



more equal between the distemper and the medicine ; and nothing can hinder the latter from proving effectual, but its being false and sophisticated.

It will here be superfluous to magnify the merits of Philosophy by displaying the pernicious tendency of that vice of which it cures the human mind. The superstitious man, says Tully, is miserable in every scene, in every incident in life ; even sleep itself, which banishes all other cares of unhappy mortals, affords to him matter of new terror, while he examines his dreams, and finds in those visions of the night prognostications of future calamities. I may add, that though death alone can put a full period to his misery, he dares not fly to this refuge, but still prolongs a miserable existence, from a vain fear lest he offend his Maker, by using the power with which that beneficent Being has endowed him. The presents of God and nature are ravished from us by this cruel enemy ; and notwithstanding that one step would remove us from the regions of pain and sorrow, her menaces still chain us down to a hated being, which she herself chiefly contributes to render miserable.

It is observed by such as have been reduced by the calamities of life to the necessity of employing this fatal remedy, that if the unseasonable care of their friends deprive them of that species of death which they proposed to themselves, they seldom venture upon any other, or can summon up so much resolution a second time, as to execute their purpose. So great is our horror of death, that when it presents itself under any form besides that to which a man has endeavoured to reconcile his imagination, it acquires new terrors, and overcomes his feeble courage : but when the menaces of superstition are joined to this natural timidity, no wonder it quite deprives men of all power over their lives, since even many pleasures and enjoyments, to which we are carried by a strong propensity, are torn from us

by this inhuman tyrant. Let us here endeavour to restore men to their native liberty, by examining all the common arguments against suicide, and showing that that action may be free from every imputation of guilt or blame, according to the sentiments of all the ancient philosophers.

If suicide be criminal, it must be a transgression of our duty either to God, our neighbour, or ourselves. To prove that suicide is no transgression of our duty to God, the following considerations may perhaps suffice. In order to govern the material world, the almighty Creator has established general and immutable laws, by which all bodies, from the greatest planet to the smallest particle of matter, are maintained in their proper sphere and function. To govern the animal world, he has endowed all living creatures with bodily and mental powers, with senses, passions, appetites, memory, and judgment, by which they are impelled or regulated in that course of life to which they are destined. These two distinct principles of the material and animal world continually encroach upon each other, and mutually retard or forward each other's operation. The powers of men and of all other animals are restrained and directed by the nature and qualities of the surrounding bodies, and the modifications and actions of these bodies are necessarily altered by the operation of all animals. Man is stopped by rivers in his passage over the surface of the earth; and rivers, when properly directed, lend their force to the motion of machines, which serve to the use of man. But though the provinces of the material and animal powers are not kept entirely separate, there results from thence no discord or disorder in the creation, on the contrary, from the mixture, union, and contrast of all the various powers of inanimate bodies and living creatures, arises that sympathy, harmony, and proportion, which affords the surest argument of Supremo

Wisdom. The providence of the Deity appears not immediately in any operation, but governs every thing by those general and immutable laws which have been established from the beginning of time. All events, in one sense, may be pronounced the action of the Almighty ; they all proceed from those powers with which he has endowed his creatures. A house which falls by its own weight, is not brought to ruin by his providence, more than one destroyed by the hands of men ; nor are the human faculties less his workmanship than the laws of motion and gravitation. When the passions play, when the judgment dictates, when the limbs obey ; this is all the operation of God ; and upon these animate principles, as well as upon the inanimate, has he established the government of the universe. Every event is alike important in the eyes of that infinite Being, who takes in at one glance the most distant regions of space, and remotest periods of time. There is no event, however important to us, which he has exempted from the general laws that govern the universe, or which he has peculiarly reserved for his own immediate action and operation. The revolution of states and empires depends upon the smallest caprice or passion of single men ; and the lives of men are shortened or extended by the smallest accident of air or diet, sunshine or tempest. Nature still continues her progress and operation ; and if general laws be ever broke by particular volitions of the Deity, it is after a manner which entirely escapes human observation. As, on the one hand, the elements and other inanimate parts of the creation carry on their action without regard to the particular interest and situation of men ; so men are intrusted to their own judgment and discretion in the various shocks of matter, and may employ every faculty with which they are endowed, in order to provide for their ease, happiness, or preservation.

What is the meaning then of that principle, that a man, who, tired of life, and limited by pain and misery, bravely overcomes all the natural terrors of death and makes his escape from this cruel scene, that such a man, I say, has incurred the indignation of his Creator, by encroaching on the office of divine providence, and disturbing the order of the universe? Shall we assert, that the Almighty has reserved to himself, in any peculiar manner, the disposal of the lives of men, and has not submitted that event, in common with others, to the general laws by which the universe is governed? This is plainly false: the lives of men depend upon the same laws as the lives of all other animals, and these are subjected to the general laws of matter and motion. The fall of a tower, or the infusion of a poison, will destroy a man equally with the meanest creature, an inundation sweeps away every thing without distinction that comes within the reach of its fury. Since therefore the lives of men are for ever dependent on the general laws of matter and motion, is a man's disposing of his life criminal, because in every case it is criminal to encroach upon these laws, or disturb their operation? But this seems absurd: all animals are intrusted to their own prudence and skill for their conduct in the world, and have full authority, as far as their power extends, to alter all the operations of nature. Without the exercise of this authority, they could not subsist a moment, every action, every motion of a man, innovates on the order of some parts of matter, and diverts from their ordinary course the general laws of motion. Putting together therefore these conclusions, we find that human life depends upon the general laws of matter and motion, and that it is no encroachment on the office of Providence to disturb or alter these general laws: has not every one of consequence the free disposal of his own life? And may he not lawfully

employ that power with which nature has endowed him? In order to destroy the evidence of this conclusion, we must show a reason why this particular case is excepted. Is it because human life is of such great importance, that it is a presumption for human prudence to dispose of it? But the life of a man is of no greater importance to the universe than that of an oyster: and were it of ever so great importance, the order of human nature has actually submitted it to human prudence, and reduced us to a necessity, in every incident, of determining concerning it.

Were the disposal of human life so much reserved as the peculiar province of the Almighty, that it were an encroachment on his right for men to dispose of their own lives, it would be equally criminal to act for the preservation of life as for its destruction. If I turn aside a stone which is falling upon my head, I disturb the course of nature; and I invade the peculiar province of the Almighty, by lengthening out my life beyond the period, which, by the general laws of matter and motion, he has assigned it.

A hair, a fly, an insect, is able to destroy this mighty being whose life is of such importance. Is it an absurdity to suppose that human prudence may lawfully dispose of what depends on such insignificant causes? It would be no crime in me to divert the Nile or Danube from its course, were I able to effect such purposes. Where then is the crime of turning a few ounces of blood from their natural channel? Do you imagine that I repine at Providence, or curse my creation, because I go out of life, and put a period to a being which, were it to continue, would render me miserable? Far be such sentiments from me. I am only convinced of a matter of fact which you yourself acknowledge possible, that human life may be unhappy; and that my existence, if further prolonged, would

become ineligible. But I thank Providence, both for the good which I have already enjoyed, and for the power with which I am endowed of escaping the ills that threaten me<sup>1</sup>. To you it belongs to repine at Providence, who foolishly imagine that you have no such power, and who must still prolong a hateful life, though loaded with pain and sickness, with shame and poverty. Do not you teach, that when any ill befalls me, though by the malice of my enemies, I ought to be resigned to Providence, and that the actions of men are the operations of the Almighty, as much as the actions of inanimate beings? When I fall upon my own sword, therefore, I receive my death equally from the hands of the Deity as if it had proceeded from a lion, a precipice, or a fever. The submission which you require to Providence, in every calamity that befalls me, excludes not human skill and industry, if possibly by their means I can avoid or escape the calamity. And why may I not employ one remedy as well as another? If my life be not my own, it were criminal for me to put it in danger, as well as to dispose of it, nor could one man deserve the appellation of *hero*, whom glory or friendship transports into the greatest dangers, and another merit the reproach of *wretch* or *miscreant*, who puts a period to his life from the same or like motives. There is no being which possesses any power or faculty, that it receives not from its Creator, nor is there any one, which by ever so irregular an action, can encroach upon the plan of his providence, or disorder the universe. Its operations are his works equally with that chain of events which it invades, and whichever principle prevails, we may for that very reason conclude it to be most favoured by him. Be it animate or inanimate, rational or irrational, it is all the same case. its

<sup>1</sup> Agamus Deo gratias quod nemo in vita teneri potest  
Seneca, Epist. xii

power is still derived from the Supreme Creator, and is alike comprehended in the order of his providence. When the horror of pain prevails over the love of life; when a voluntary action anticipates the effects of blind causes; it is only in consequence of those powers and principles which he has implanted in his creatures. Divine Providence is still inviolate, and placed far beyond the reach of human injuries. It is impious, says the old Roman superstition, to divert rivers from their course, or invade the prerogatives of nature. It is impious, says the French superstition, to inoculate for the smallpox, or usurp the business of Providence, by voluntarily producing distempers and maladies. It is impious, says the modern European superstition, to put a period to our own life, and thereby rebel against our Creator: and why not impious, say I, to build houses, cultivate the ground, or sail upon the ocean? In all these actions we employ our powers of mind and body to produce some innovation in the course of nature; and in none of them do we any more. They are all of them therefore equally innocent, or equally criminal. *But you are placed by Providence, like a sentinel, in a particular station; and when you desert it without being recalled, you are equally guilty of rebellion against your Almighty Sovereign, and have incurred his displeasure*—I ask, Why do you conclude that Providence has placed me in this station? For my part, I find that I owe my birth to a long chain of causes, of which many depended upon voluntary actions of men. *But Providence guided all these causes, and nothing happens in the universe without its consent and coöperation.* If so, then neither does my death, however voluntary, happen without its consent; and whenever pain or sorrow so far overcome my patience, as to make me tired of life, I may conclude that I am recalled from my station in the clearest and most express terms. It is Providence

surely that has placed me at this present moment in this chamber: but may I not leave it when I think proper, without being liable to the imputation of having deserted my post or station? When I shall be dead, the principles of which I am composed will still perform their part in the universe, and will be equally useful in the grand fabric, as when they composed this individual creature. The difference to the whole will be no greater than betwixt my being in a chamber and in the open air. The one change is of more importance to me than the other, but not more so to the universe.

It is a kind of blasphemy, to imagine that any created being can disturb the order of the world, or mar the business of Providence? It supposes, that that being possesses powers and faculties which it received not from its Creator, and which are not subordinate to his government and authority. A man may disturb society, no doubt, and thereby incur the displeasure of the Almighty; but the government of the world is placed far beyond his reach and violence. And how does it appear that the Almighty is displeased with those actions that disturb society? By the principles which he has implanted in human nature, and which inspire us with a sentiment of remorse if we ourselves have been guilty of such actions, and with that of blame and disapprobation, if we ever observe them in others. Let us now examine, according to the method proposed, whether Suicide be of this kind of actions, and be a breach of our duty to our *neighbour* and to *society*.

A man who retires from life does no harm to society: he only ceases to do good; which, if it is an injury, is of the lowest kind. All our obligations to do good to society seem to imply something reciprocal. I receive the benefits of society, and therefore ought to promote its interests; but when I withdraw myself altogether from society, can I be



bound any longer? But allowing that our obligations to do good were perpetual, they have certainly some bounds; I am not obliged to do a small good to society at the expense of a great harm to myself: why, then, should I prolong a miserable existence, because of some frivolous advantage which the public may perhaps receive from me? If upon account of age and infirmities, I may lawfully resign any office, and employ my time altogether in fencing against these calamities, and alleviating as much as possible the miseries of my future life; why may I not cut short these miseries at once by an action which is no more prejudicial to society? But suppose that it is no longer in my power to promote the interest of society; suppose that I am a burden to it; suppose that my life hinders some person from being much more useful to society: in such cases, my resignation of life must not only be innocent, but laudable. And most people who lie under any temptation to abandon existence, are in some such situation; those who have health, or power, or authority, have commonly better reason to be in humour with the world.

A man is engaged in a conspiracy for the public interest; is seized upon suspicion; is threatened with the rack; and knows from his own weakness that the secret will be extorted from him: could such a one consult the public interest better than by putting a quick period to a miserable life? This was the case of the famous and brave Strozzi of Florence. Again, suppose a malefactor is justly condemned to a shameful death; can any reason be imagined why he may not anticipate his punishment, and save himself all the anguish of thinking on its dreadful approaches? He invades the business of Providence no more than the magistrate did who ordered his execution; and his voluntary death is equally advantageous to society, by ridding it of a pernicious member.

That Suicide may often be consistent with interest and with our duty to ourselves, no one can question, who allows that age, sickness, or misfortune, may render life a burden, and make it worse even than annihilation. I believe that no man ever throws away life while it was worth keeping. For such is our natural horror of death, that small motives will never be able to reconcile us to it; and though perhaps the situation of a man's health or fortune did not seem to require this remedy, we may at least be assured, that any one who, without apparent reason, has had recourse to it, was cursed with such an incurable depravity or gloominess of temper as must poison all enjoyment, and render him equally miserable as if he had been loaded with the most grievous misfortune. If Suicide be supposed a crime, it is only cowardice can impel us to it. If it be no crime, both prudence and courage should engage us to rid ourselves at once of existence when it becomes a burden. It is the only way that we can then be useful to society, by setting an example, which, if imitated, would preserve to every one his chance for happiness in life, and would effectually free him from all danger or misery.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It would be easy to prove that suicide is as lawful under the Christian dispensation as it was to the Heathens. There is not a single text of Scripture which prohibits it. That great and infallible rule of faith and practice which must control all philosophy and human reasoning, has left us in this particular to our natural liberty. Resignation to Providence is indeed recommended in Scripture, but that implies only submission to ills that are unavoidable, not to such as may be remedied by prudence or courage. *Thou shalt not kill*, is evidently meant to exclude only the killing of others, over whose life we have no authority. That this precept, like most of the Scripture precepts, must be modified by reason and common sense, is plain from the practice of magistrates, who punish criminals capitally, notwithstanding the letter of the law. But were this commandment ever so express against suicide, it would now have no authority, for all the law of *Moses* is abolished, except so far as it is

established by the law of nature. And we have already endeavoured to prove that suicide is not prohibited by that law. In all cases Christians and Heathens are precisely upon the same footing; *Cato* and *Brutus*, *Arria* and *Portia* acted heroically; those who now imitate their example ought to receive the same praises from posterity. The power of committing suicide is regarded by *Pliny* as an advantage which men possess even above the Deity himself. "*Deus non sibi potest mortem consciscere si velit, quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ pœnis.*"—Lib. II. cap. 7.

## ESSAY IX

### ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

By the mere light of reason it seems difficult to prove the immortality of the soul; the arguments for it are commonly derived either from metaphysical topics, or moral, or physical. But in reality it is the gospel, and the gospel alone, that has brought *life and immortality to light*.

1 Metaphysical topics suppose that the soul is immaterial, and that it is impossible for thought to belong to a material substance. But just metaphysics teach us, that the notion of substance is wholly confused and imperfect, and that we have no other idea of any substance, than as an aggregate of particular qualities inhering in an unknown something. Matter, therefore, and spirit, are at bottom equally unknown; and we cannot determine what qualities inhere in the one or in the other. They likewise teach us, that nothing can be decided *a priori* concerning any cause or effect, and that experience, being the only source of our judgments of this nature, we cannot know from any other principle, whether matter, by its structure or arrangement, may not be the cause of thought. Abstract reasonings cannot decide any question of fact or existence. But admitting a spiritual substance to be dispersed throughout the universe, like the ethereal fire of the Stoics, and to be the only inherent subject of thought, we have reason to conclude from *analogy*, that nature uses it after the

manner she does the other substance, *matter*, employs it as a kind of paste or clay; modifies it into a variety of forms and existences; disposes after a time each modification, and from its substrae erects a new form. As the same material substance may successively compose the bodies of all animals, the same spiritual substance may compose all minds: their consciousness, or that system of thought which they formed during life, may be continually dissolved by death, and nothing enter them in the new modification. The most positive assertors of the mortality of the soul never deny the immortality of its substance; and that an immaterial substance, as well as a material, may lose memory or consciousness, appears in part from experience, if the soul be immaterial. Reason from the common course of nature, and with supposing any new interposition of the Supreme Cause, which ought always to be excluded from philosophy, *what is incorruptible must also be ingenerable*. The soul therefore, if immortal, exists before our birth; and if the former existence now concerned us, neither will the latter. Animals undoubtedly feel, think, love, hate, will, and can reason, though in a more imperfect manner than men: are their souls also immaterial and immortal?

II. Let us now consider the moral arguments chiefly those derived from the justice of God, who is supposed to be further interested in the future punishment of the vicious and reward of the virtuous. But these arguments are grounded on the supposition that God has attributes beyond what he has exerted in this universe, with which alone we are acquainted. Whence do we infer the existence of these attributes? It is very safe for us to affirm that whatever we know the Deity to have actually done is best; but it is very dangerous to affirm that he must always do what to us seems best. In many instances would this reasoning fail us if

regard to the present world? But if any purpose of nature be clear, we may affirm, that the whole scope and intention of man's creation, so far as we can judge by natural reason, is limited to the present life. With how weak a concern from the original inherent structure of the mind and passions, does he ever look further? What comparison either for steadiness or efficacy, betwixt so fleeting an idea and the most doubtful persuasion of any matter of fact that occurs in common life? There arise indeed in some minds some unaccountable terrors with regard to futurity; but these would quickly vanish were they not artificially fostered by precept and education. And those who foster them, what is their motive? Only to gain a livelihood, and to acquire power and riches in this world. Their very zeal and industry, therefore, are an argument against them.

What cruelty, what iniquity, what injustice in nature, to confine all our concern, as well as all our knowledge, to the present life, if there be another scene still waiting us of infinitely greater consequence? Ought this barbarous deceit to be ascribed to a beneficent and wise Being? Observe with what exact proportion the task to be performed, and the performing powers, are adjusted throughout all nature. If the reason of man gives him great superiority above other animals, his necessities are proportionably multiplied upon him. His whole time, his whole capacity, activity, courage, and passion, find sufficient employment in fencing against the miseries of his present condition, and frequently, nay, almost always, are too slender for the business assigned them. A pair of shoes, perhaps, was never yet wrought to the highest degree of perfection which that commodity is capable of attaining, yet it is necessary, at least very useful, that there should be some politicians and moralists, even some geometers, poets, and philosophers among



men, the good and the bad, but the greatest part of mankind float betwixt vice and virtue. Were one to go round the world with an intention of giving a good supper to the righteous and a sound drubbing to the wicked, he would frequently be embarrassed in his choice, and would find the merits and demerits of most men and women scarcely amount to the value of either. To suppose measures of approbation and blame different from the human confounds every thing. Whence do we learn that there is such a thing as moral distinctions, but from our own sentiments? What man who has not met with personal provocation (or what good natured man who has) could inflict on crimes, from the sense of blame alone, even the common, legal, frivolous punishments? And does any thing steel the breast of judges and juries against the sentiments of humanity but reflection on necessity and public interest? By the Roman law, those who had been guilty of parricide, and confessed their crime, were put into a sack along with an ape, a dog, and a serpent, and thrown into the river. Death alone was the punishment of those who denied their guilt, however fully proved. A criminal was tried before Augustus, and condemned after a full conviction, but the humane emperor, when he put the last interrogatory, gave it such a turn as to lead the wretch into a denial of his guilt. "You surely (said the prince) did not kill your father?" This lenity suits our natural ideas of right even towards the greatest of all criminals, and even though it prevents so inconsiderable a suffering. Nay, even the most bigoted priest would naturally without reflection approve of it, provided the crime was not heresy or infidelity, for as these crimes hurt himself in his *temporal* interest and advantages, perhaps he may not be altogether so indulgent to them. The chief source of moral ideas is the reflection on the interests of human society.



Ought these interests, so short, so frivolous, to be guarded by punishments eternal and infinite? The damnation of one man is an infinitely greater evil in the universe than the subversion of a thousand millions of kingdoms. Nature has rendered human infancy peculiarly frail and mortal, as it were on purpose to refute the notion of a probationary state; the half of mankind die before they are rational creatures.

III. The physical arguments from the analogy of nature are strong for the mortality of the soul; and are really the only philosophical arguments which ought to be admitted with regard to this question, or indeed any question of fact. Where any two objects are so closely connected that all alterations which we have ever seen in the one are attended with proportionable alterations in the other; we ought to conclude, by all rules of analogy, that, when there are still greater alterations produced in the former, and it is totally dissolved, there follows a total dissolution of the latter. Sleep, a very small effect on the body, is attended with a temporary extinction, at least a great confusion in the soul. The weakness of the body and that of the mind in infancy are exactly proportioned; their vigour in manhood, their sympathetic disorder in sickness, their common gradual decay in old age. The step further seems unavoidable; their common dissolution in death. The last symptoms which the mind discovers, are disorder, weakness, insensibility, and stupidity; the forerunners of its annihilation. The further progress of the same causes increasing, the same effects totally extinguish it. Judging by the usual analogy of nature, no form can continue when transferred to a condition of life very different from the original one in which it was placed. Trees perish in the water, fishes in the air, animals in the earth. Even so small a difference as that of climate is often fatal. What reason then to imagine, that

a more or less alteration, such as is made in the soul by the dissolution of its body, and all its organs of thought and sensation, can be effected without the dissolution of the whole? Every thing is in common between soul and body. The organs of the one are all of them the organs of the other, the existence, therefore, of the one must be dependent on the other. The souls of animals are allowed to be mortal; and these bear so near a resemblance to the souls of men that the analogy from one to the other forms a very strong argument. Their bodies are not more resembling yet no one rejects the argument drawn from comparative anatomy. The Metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can bear in to.

Nothing in this world is perpetual, every thing, however, seemingly firm, is in continual flux and change. The world itself gives symptoms of frailty and dissolution. How contrary to analogy, therefore, to imagine that one single form, seeming the feeblest of any, and subject to the greatest disorders, is immortal and indissoluble? What theory is that? How lightly, not to say how rashly, entertained! How to dispose of the infinite number of posthumous existences ought also to embarrass the religious theory. Every planet in every solar system, we are at liberty to imagine peopled with intelligent mortal beings, at least we can fix on no other supposition. For these then a new universe must every generation be created beyond the bounds of the present universe, or one must have been created at first so prodigiously wide as to admit of this continual influx of beings. Ought such bold suppositions to be received by any philosophy, and that merely on the pretext of a bare possibility? When it is asked, whether Agamemnon, Theseus, Hannibal, Varro, and every stupid clown that ever existed in Italy, Scythia, Bactria, or Guinea, are now alive? can any man think, that a scrutiny of nature will furnish

arguments strong enough to answer so strange a question in the affirmative? The want of argument without revelation sufficiently establishes the negative. *Quanto facilius*, says Pliny, *certiusque sibi quæmque credere, ac specimen securitatis antiquæ tali sumere experimento*. Our insensibility before the composition of the body seems to natural reason a proof of a like state after dissolution. Were our horrors of annihilation an original passion, not the effect of our general love of happiness, it would rather prove the mortality of the soul : for as nature does nothing in vain, she would never give us a horror against an impossible event. She may give us a horror against an unavoidable event, provided our endeavours, as in the present case, may often remove it to some distance. Death is in the end unavoidable ; yet the human species could not be preserved had not nature inspired us with an aversion towards it. All doctrines are to be suspected which are favoured by our passions ; and the hopes and fears which gave rise to this doctrine are very obvious.

It is an infinite advantage in every controversy to defend the negative. If the question be out of the common experienced course of nature, this circumstance is almost if not altogether decisive. By what arguments or analogies can we prove any state of existence, which no one ever saw, and which no way resembles any that ever was seen? Who will repose such trust in any pretended philosophy as to admit upon its testimony the reality of so marvellous a scene? Some new species of logic is requisite for that purpose, and some new faculties of the mind, that they may enable us to comprehend that logic.

Nothing could set in a fuller light the infinite obligations which mankind have to Divine revelation, since we find that no other medium could ascertain this great and important truth.

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR  
BY HIMSELF



